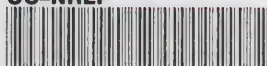


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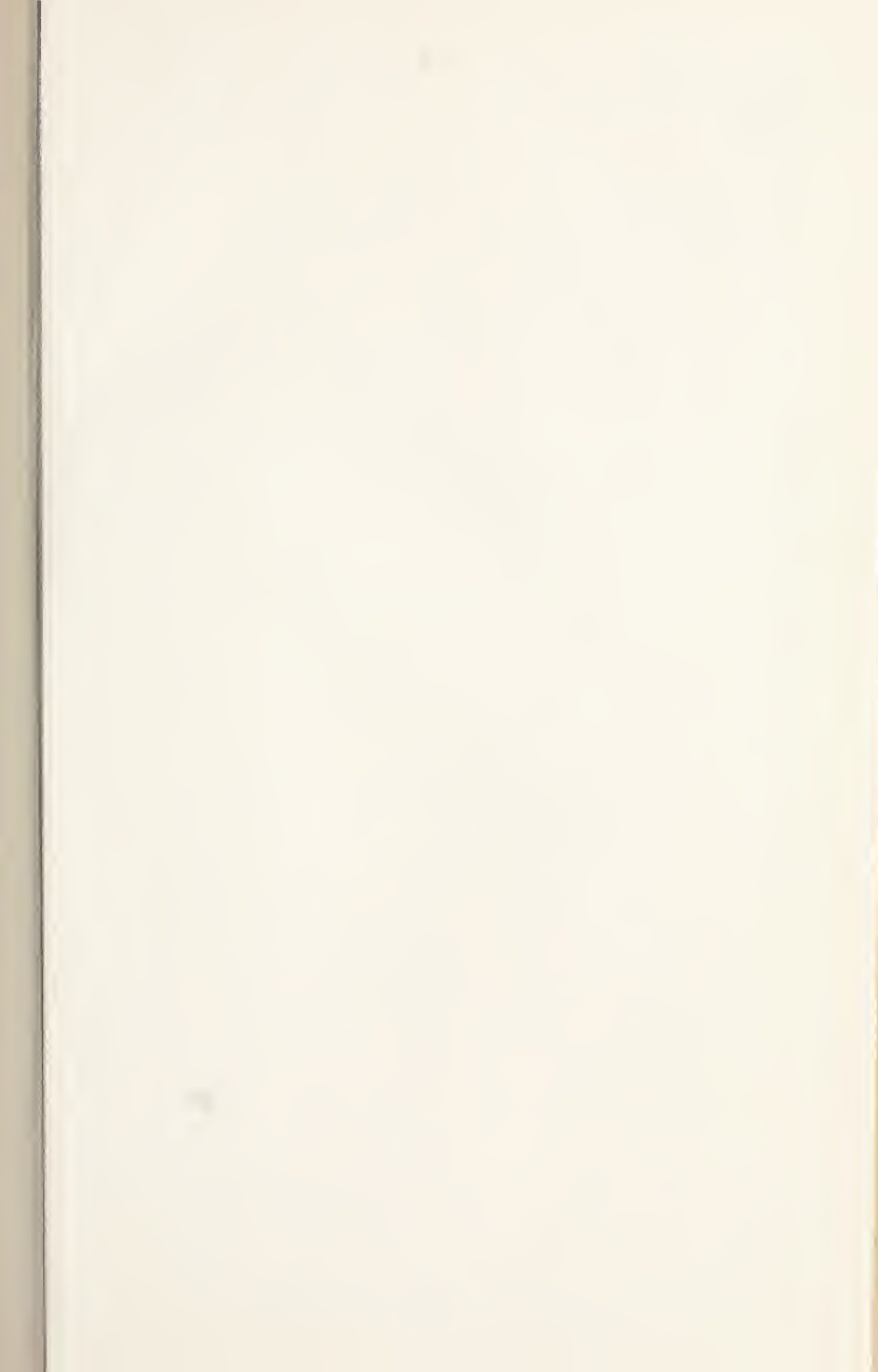


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A Memoir  
OF  
THE PROFESSIONAL LIFE  
OF  
Thomas Abthorpe  
Cooper.

BY  
JOSEPH NORTON IRELAND.



Publications of The Dunlap Society. No. 5.

New-York, 1888.







# THEATRE.

MR. COOPER'S FOURTH NIGHT.

THIS Evening, Friday, November 24, will be presented Mr. Payne's tragedy of

BRUTUS;

Or, THE FALL OF TARQUIN.

Lucius Junius Brutus, MR. COOPER.

To conclude with

KILLING NO MURDER.

Rolla was personated by Mr. Cooper on Wednesday evening in his best manner. A genteel audience testified their satisfaction by repeated acclamations. It was expected that Mr. Cooper would have been supported on this occasion by the regular members of the company with as much cheerfulness as they manifested during the last engagement of Mr. Wallack. This expectation was disappointed. Mr. Brown did indeed appear in the character of Alonzo, and walked through it with as much *non-chalance* as he would put on his night cap. Mr. Pelby, as the managers stated, positively refused to play Ataliba, (although he had twice complimented Mr. Wallack with such an act of *condescending politeness*) and Mr. Holland came on as his substitute. Mr. Duff, in Pizarro, was not quite up to his usual level and appeared to labour under much embarrassment and confusion—probably produced by the green-room oppugnation above-mentioned. We believe it easier to “guide a ship imperial—alone—and in a storm”—than to quell the clamours and suppress the mutinies among the crew of a theatrical cock-boat. The experience of the last season should teach those who live by public munificence, that the public have claims upon them which are not to be slighted with impunity. If they mean to *draw* upon the public purse for a benefit, they must first make a *deposit*, or their *draft* may not be *accepted*. The public do not ask these gentlemen to degrade themselves by playing parts beneath their talents. They do not ask them to play the letter-carriers and player kings. They have no wish to make them drudges or supernumeraries. All they ask is, that such a disposition of the parts should be made as to bring into action the whole strength of the company. This is reasonable—it is what they have a right to expect—and what they ought imperatively to demand.







This is one of an edition of one hundred and ninety copies printed from type for the Dunlap Society in the month of February, 1888.

*Thos. L. De Vinne & Co.*



THOMAS ABTHORPE COOPER







THO<sup>S</sup>. COOPERESQ<sup>R</sup>.

A MEMOIR  
OF  
THE PROFESSIONAL LIFE  
OF  
THOMAS ABTHORPE COOPER

BY  
JOSEPH NORTON IRELAND



NEW-YORK :  
THE DUNLAP SOCIETY  
1888

1218



## INTRODUCTORY.

MANY sketches of Mr. Cooper's life and criticisms of his acting have been given in the periodicals of his day, and in subsequent histories of the stage.

Carpenter in "The Mirror of Taste," Buckingham in "The Boston Polyanthus," Dunlap, Wood, Wemyss, Clapp, Cowell, Ludlow, Rees, Murdoch, and others have written of him in terms of high commendation. As an almost perfect specimen of manly beauty, his fine-cut features, his noble form, his dignity of manner and grace of action, his melodious yet powerful voice, ranging from the softest tenor to the deepest bass, and accompanied by the facial expression of an angel, or that of the malignity of a demon, have all been descanted on in vivid terms. The excellence of his portrayal of most of the leading heroes of the stage during the meridian of his career was universally acknowledged and secured the most liberal patronage. He was then an unrivaled and unbounded favorite, and his brilliant success secured him a fortune which at the time was surpassed by few, a millionaire being then a rarity.

His faults and failings have been freely spoken of; the extravagance of his household expenditures, the elegance of his equipage, his conviviality at the dinner table, his delicacy of taste, and accuracy of judgment in his selection of wines — of which his cellar always

boasted an ample stock ; his propensity for gambling, his occasional practical jokes, his inveterate habit of betting, whether on the speed of a horse, the height of a room, the wick of a candle, or the length of a straw, have all been frequently discussed. A believer in the so-called code of honor, his challenges were several times presented ; yet with the kindest spirit, he more than once prevented a duel between his friends and restored them to a condition of cordial amity.

Though never called an inebriate, it was believed that some of his lapses of memory were due to his lingering too long over the wine cups of his friends. He squandered a fortune in folly, while many generous and courteously tender acts of benevolence, including liberal contributions to the support of his mother, are recorded to his honor. Strict devotion to his duties marked the maturity of his dramatic career, punctuality and rigid correctness pervaded his whole life, says Mr. W. B. Wood. One more nearly attached to him adds that he was a man of absolute integrity of character, with a heart full of tender love for his children, who in return regarded him with devoted veneration and the most ardent affection.

Passing over many of these particulars, the following pages will contain, it is believed, the most comprehensive and accurate account of his theatrical career from its beginning to its end that has ever appeared ; and the writer, as an apology for once more undertaking a dramatic biography, may assure his readers that, but for the urgent solicitation of friends, he would not have ventured again to obtrude upon their notice.





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My dear Sir

With your leave the goodness  
to desire the wardrobe keeper to pack  
up in box well filled with shavings my  
helmet & send by the first ship to  
Charleston. Direct to me there.  
If there is anything I can do for  
you in the South I trust you may  
command me. A letter will reach  
me at Bath. Yours truly  
Th. A. Cooper

S. Simpson Esq

I enclose a dollar for the expense  
as above



# Thomas Abthorpe Cooper.

## CHAPTER I.

1776-1796.

THOMAS COOPER,\* by which only designation this favorite and eminent actor was originally known, was the son of Doctor Cooper, a prominent physician descended from a highly respectable Irish family which had settled at Harrow-on-the-Hill, England, where our subject was born in the year 1776.

Doctor Cooper had entered the service of the East India Company as a ship's surgeon, and in 1783 was appointed surgeon to the factory at Bauleah in Bengal, where he died in October, 1787, leaving his family— from unfortunate investments—in destitute circum-

\* The "A" in Mr. Cooper's name was introduced by himself after his arrival in America to distinguish him from another Thomas Cooper, whose letters were frequently commingled with his,—and his friends finally extended the "A" into Abthorpe, an addition which it is believed he never himself adopted.

stances. His widow was obliged to take a situation as housekeeper — her younger son and a daughter were adopted by relatives, while Thomas — then in his twelfth year — was taken gratuitously as a pupil by the celebrated philosopher and author, William Godwin, whose mother was first cousin to Mrs. Cooper.

Mrs. Shelley, the daughter of Godwin, has left the following interesting note on the characters of tutor and pupil: "Godwin, who from the very nature of his opinions was led to analyze mind and draw conclusions as to character, had a sanguine faith in the practicability of improvement and entertained rigid notions on the subject of education. Tom Cooper was a spirited boy, extremely independent and resolute, proud, wilful and indolent. Godwin, conscientious to the last degree in his treatment of every one, extended his utmost care to the task of education, but many things rendered him unfit for it. His severity was confined to words, but these were pointed and humiliating. He took great pains with his kinsman, and devoted attention and care to his instruction."

With his friend and teacher Cooper had frequent squabbles, as also with Mr. James Marshall, who at the time was a resident in Mr. Godwin's house. To Mr. Marshall we find addressed the first known letter of our hero, written apparently in 1790, when he was about fourteen years of age, and which throws a strong light on the lad's character and disposition. It runs thus:

"SIR: I am convinced that I was wrong in not immediately desisting from that from which you desired me to

desist ; I therefore ask your pardon, and I shall endeavor to make amends for my misconduct by my future behavior. . . . We lived some time, sir, in the same house, and I believe with a certain degree of friendship and good understanding. I am sorry that that friendship and good understanding have received such a shock as they have done to-day. I was certainly wrong, as I have already said, in not complying with your desire ; that non-compliance brought on high words, in course of which you directly called me a liar. You called me so, not by implication ; you said, ‘ You are a liar ! ’ I am glad that I have escaped doing that which your words naturally excited me to do.

“ T. COOPER.”

Godwin’s care and instruction of Cooper during this period were of the most disinterested and unfailing character, and as he himself expressed it, were for the sole object of rendering him virtuous and respectable in after-life.

When sixteen years of age, Cooper manifested a strong desire to adopt the stage as a profession, and with his guardian’s approval and encouragement and the recommendation of Holcroft, the dramatist, he visited Edinburgh, in the hope of securing an engagement from Mr. Stephen Kemble, then manager of the theatre there.

His reception by that gentleman, and succeeding occurrences during his sojourn in Edinburgh, are described in letters to Mr. Godwin, from whose life, by Mr. Kegan Paul, the following extracts are taken :

“EDINBURGH, July 27th, 1792.

“I arrived here last night in high health and spirits. . . . I went to Mr. Kemble’s this morning at eleven, and he told me that at one he would hear me go through the character of *Douglas*. At one, I went, but he left word (with his compliments) that he was obliged to go to Leith. To-morrow morning at twelve, I am to rehearse with Mrs. Siddons, and on Monday night am to make my first appearance in the character of *Douglas*. . . . Friday, two o’clock. ‘Sdeath, I’m sped! I have just rehearsed *Douglas* with the other actors before Mr. Kemble. When I had done, he walked aside with me, and told me he was sorry to say that he could not trust me with the character. He then made his individual objections. He said that in two descriptive speeches I had a great deal too much passion, especially in the last; and that in the scene with *Glenalvon*, the audience would laugh at me.”

“AUGUST.—My courage is as great as you could wish, considering that I stand upon a shaking foundation. Every time Mr. Kemble sees me, I perceive, or think I perceive a kind of discontent arising from want of determination in his countenance. I do not keep company with any of the actors except in the greenroom. Let me know of mother’s health, etc., soon. . . . Monday. The above was written on Saturday, since which something of importance has occurred. I went this morning into the pay-room to receive my money, and having got it, asked Mr. Kemble’s advice relative to my manner of traveling to Lancaster, whither we remove in the middle of this week. ‘Why, really, Mr. Cooper, I think the best thing you can do is to go back to London.’ I told him that I believed if he would give me a hearing in *Lothario*, I could please him. He said I was not at all fit to play it. He

then said that he had a great respect for Mr. Holcroft, and must endeavor to bring me forward little by little. To-night I am one of Mrs. Siddons's train (dumb as usual) in 'The Mourning Bride.' On Wednesday, I am to be the second witch in 'Macbeth.' Mr. Kemble told me that if he had thought of it in time I should have played *Malcolm*, and desired me to learn it. On Thursday I believe I shall begin my march to Lancaster."

From the above, it would seem that the young man had been employed by Mr. Kemble in several subordinate characters. In another letter he says:

"You need be under no apprehension concerning money, for I get a guinea every Monday."

Again, in a letter dated Newcastle, August 16th, 1792, he writes:

"The die is cast, and when, having tottered some time, I thought myself firm, at that instant the fate was reversed, and I fell headlong without hopes of recovery. . . . He desired me to study *Malcolm* against the next time it was acted. But the next morning I told him that I would undertake it for that time, as I had two before me; he consented. I went through the part very well, and tolerably perfectly, till I came within two lines of the end of the play (I speak the last speech), and there I wanted the word. The noise behind the scenes, the play being nearly over, prevented my hearing the prompter, and in an instant some people at the back of the gallery, as I guessed, began to hiss, and immediately everybody else began to clap, and as we were so near the end it was not advisable to wait the conclusion of the bustle to say the few words

that remained. The trumpets sounded and the curtain fell. My blame consisted in want of courage, or recollection, in not skipping to the next line the very instant they began to hiss, and it was impossible to catch the word. Mr. Kemble made this his handle, declared I was totally unfit for the profession, and that I had not one single requisite for an actor; and in fine he said, 'As a friend I advise you to return to London. I cannot keep you.' I told him that I would undertake anything, however low, if I was not qualified for higher, and in proportion to my little utility would be willing to receive little. . . . I ought to observe that Mr. Charteris goes away by his own choice with a number of other actors from Mr. Kemble's company, who are going to stroll as a sharing company. I have been endeavoring to get admission into it, but have not succeeded, and I suppose shall not. . . . If you can, suggest any means by which in London I can earn 10s. 6d. per week, at the expense even of four or five hours a day. 10s. 6d. is sufficient to live on. . . . I shall presently be left alone here. It is now Thursday. They play here for the last time on Friday.

"T. COOPER."

It does not appear, however, that the young man returned to London to seek a situation yielding 10s. 6d. per week; but, though discouraged by his lack of success in his early efforts, he nevertheless persisted in his devotion to the profession, and secured engagements with various provincial or strolling companies, in some of which his salary was only ten shillings a week. He played at Chichester, Newport, Portsmouth, Cheltenham, Liverpool, but met frequent disappointments in being deprived of parts that he had expected

to shine in. At Stockport, in October, 1794, he threw up an engagement because he was occasionally required by the manager to deliver messages, although he was there also intrusted with many good parts. He writes:

"If it were a respectable company, I would gladly accept the good parts he gave me, though a few messages were thrown in with them, because it was really a good line; but, in that situation, I hardly think it would be right to stay, even if I did nothing else but the good parts. They are such a wretched set of mummers. . . . They seldom speak a word of the author. . . . I am now 170 miles from town. I shall start from hence with five shillings in my pocket. I will black shoes at the corner of Goodge Street for 1s. a day sooner than be anything but a leader—among a set of wretches I despise. 'Io Triumphe,'

"THOS. COOPER."

In January, 1795, he writes to Mr. Godwin:

"The purport of my present letter is to tell you that I am in treaty with Mr. Dorset (fiends!) to become a clerk in his house, and by this means I intend to advance toward riches."

This intention was probably carried into effect for a short time only, as he soon after was again under the supervision of Mr. Holcroft, who, taking a renewed interest in his dramatic capabilities and aspirations, now gave him a course of minute instruction in the business of the stage, and, as would now be said, thoroughly coached him in some of Shakespeare's leading characters, as well as those of other favorite dramatists.

Through this influence an opportunity was secured for his appearance at Covent Garden, where he made his first attempt in London on the 19th of October, 1795, as *Hamlet*, announced simply as "a Young Gentleman, his first appearance on this stage," being received by the audience with gratifying and abundant applause. Critics, as usual, differed in their opinions, and politics seemed to have had an influence in forming them, for Mr. Holcroft, being in opposition to the Government, and Mr. Cooper known as his pupil, the opposition prints of the day were lavish in extravagant eulogy, while those of the Government went to the opposite extreme. The "London Monthly Mirror," professedly independent, proclaimed the performance, for a first appearance in London, *unusually brilliant*, and described the actor as of middle size—his features not strongly expressive of any particular character, with more softness and playfulness than spirit or energy about them, yet with artful management suited to either tragedy or comedy; naturally inclinable perhaps to the latter—adding that "his voice is in tone pleasing; capable of more modulation than he seems to know how to give it; firm and extensive in the upper division; in the lower, musical and articulate. Indeed, he can have nothing to lay to the charge of Nature for a scanty supply of her gifts; if he does not make use of them properly the fault lies with himself." After repeating *Hamlet* on October 26th and November 2d, on which latter evening his name was first announced, he appeared on the 6th of November as "the gallant, gay *Lothario*" in "The Fair

Theatre-Royal, in Covent-Garden,

This present MONDAY, Oct. 19, 1795,

Will be presented the Tragedy of

# H A M L E T.

Hamlet by a YOUNG GENTLEMAN,

(Being his First Appearance.)

Ghost by Mr TOMS,

Horatio by Mr HARLEY,

Laertes by Mr MIDDLETON,

King by Mr RICHARDSON,

Oftrick by Mr BERNARD,

Polonius by Mr MUNDEN,

Rofencrans by Mr MACREADY,

Guiltenstern Mr Claremont, Marcellus Mr Williamfon,

Francisco Mr FARLEY, Bernardo Mr CROSS, Priest Mr POWEL,

Player King Mr THOMPSON, Lufianus Mr DAVENPORT,

Sailor Mr LEDGER, Gentleman Mr ABBOTT,

Grave-diggers, Mess. QUICK and REES,

Ophelia by Mrs. MOUNTAIN,

Player Queen by Mrs. PLATT,

And the Queen by Mrs. POPE.

In Act V. a DIRGE, fet to Music by Mr. SHIELD.

The WORDS from SHAKSPEARE.

The VOCAL PARTS by Mrs. Martyr, Mrs. Clendinning, Miss Stuart, Mrs. Watts, Mrs. Lloyd, Mrs. Blurton, Miss Walcup, Mrs. Masters, Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Follett, Mrs. Costello, Miss Ives, Miss Leferve—and Mess. Haynes, Linton, Street, &c.

To which will be added (First time at this Theatre) the Farce of

# The G H O S T.

Farmer Harrow by Mr KNIGHT,

Trusty by Mr POWEL,

Clinch by Mr FARLEY,

Sir Jeffery by Mr DAVENPORT,

Capt. Constant by Mr CLAREMONT,

Belinda by Miss IVES,

And Dolly by Mrs DAVENPORT.

NO MONEY TO BE RETURNED.

---

On Wednesday, 14th Time, the last new Comedy of the  
DESERTED DAUGHTER.

with the grand Ballet Pantomime of OSCAR AND MALVINA.

On Thursday Miss GOUGH will make her First Appearance in this Kingdom,  
in the Character of Alicia, in the Tragedy of JANE SHORE.

On Friday, 4th time, a New Tragedy called The SECRET TRIBUNAL.  
Mrs. SERRES will perform Polly in the BEGGAR'S OPERA on Saturday.



Penitent," in which his success was less decided ; and on the 30th of that month, in the arduous character of *Macbeth*, he displayed a skill, as critics said, beyond what, for so young a man, could have been expected. He was not considered, however, by Mr. Harris, the manager, as having sufficient experience to be intrusted with the entire range of tragic heroes, and declining an offered engagement for secondary characters, he received £50 for his five nights' service, and betook himself once more to the provinces, where in 1796 he received an offer from Mr. Wignell of the Philadelphia Theatre, which induced him to cross the Atlantic.

## CHAPTER II.

1796-1803.

Mr. Cooper arrived in New-York on the 18th of October, 1796, in company with the distinguished Mrs. Merry and her husband, Mr. John Bernard, Mr. William Warren, and other notabilities, and shortly after proceeded with the Philadelphia Company to Baltimore, where a preliminary season was usually made, and where his first appearance in America took place on the 11th of November in that year, in the character of *Penruddock* in Cumberland's then new serious comedy of "The Wheel of Fortune"—a singular choice for the début of a young man of twenty, but selected, perhaps, because it had not previously been performed there, and as giving some opportunity for fine acting in the hero's transitional progress from a bitter, misanthropic state of feeling to a kinder, nobler, and more generous one. It seemed to be a lasting favorite with Mr. Cooper, for he continued its occasional performance to a very late period in his career, though the play was not very popular with the public. The other parts that Mr. Cooper personated at Baltimore are not to be found, but on the opening of the season at the Chestnut Street Theatre, in Philadelphia, he was introduced to its audience in the character of *Macbeth*, on the 9th of December in the same year, 1796.





THEATRE.

Friday evening, December 9th, 1796.

WILL BE PRESENTED, SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY OF

MACBETH.

MACBETH.....MR. COOPER.

From Covent Garden, London, his first appearance here.

|                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Duncan</i> .....       | MR. L'ESTRANGE. |
| <i>Malcolm</i> .....      | " FOX.          |
| <i>Donalbain</i> .....    | MASTER WARRELL. |
| <i>Macduff</i> ..         | MR. MORETON.    |
| <i>Banquo</i> .....       | " WARREN.       |
| <i>Lenox</i> .....        | " WARRELL, JR.  |
| <i>Seward</i> .....       | " MORRIS.       |
| <i>Seyton</i> .....       | " DARLEY, JR.   |
| <i>Doctor</i> .....       | " WARRELL.      |
| <i>Messenger</i> .....    | " MITCHELL.     |
| <i>Hecate</i> ..          | " DARLEY.       |
| <i>1st Witch</i> .....    | " WIGNELL.      |
| <i>2d Witch</i> .....     | " FRANCIS.      |
| <i>3d Witch</i> .....     | " HARWOOD.      |
| <i>Lady Macbeth</i> ..... | MRS. MORRIS.    |
| <i>Gentlewoman</i> .....  | " OLDFIELD.     |

The vocal parts by Messrs. Darley, Darley, Jr., Mitchell, Warrell, Warrell, Jr., Blissett, Mesdames Warrell, Oldmixon, Gillingham, Harvey, Doctor, Mechler, L'Estrange, Miss Milbourne, Miss L'Estrange, etc.

Concluding with the Farce of

THE PRIZE.

|                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Doctor Lenitive</i> ..... | MR. HARWOOD.     |
| <i>Heartwell</i> .....       | " FOX.           |
| <i>Caddy</i> .....           | " WARRELL.       |
| <i>Label</i> .....           | " FRANCIS.       |
| <i>Boy</i> .....             | MASTER WARRELL.  |
| <i>Juba</i> .....            | MISS MILBOURNE.  |
| <i>Mrs. Caddy</i> .....      | MRS. L'ESTRANGE. |
| <i>Caroline</i> .....        | MRS. OLDMIXON.   |

He was favorably received, but the first rank in tragedy was already occupied by Mr. Fennell, who, having come out with a previous company of Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, had likewise preoccupied the favor of the public, especially of the literary men. Tall, handsome in person, well educated, and ever courteous, Fennell as a gentleman at this time stood high. He lived splendidly, courted the world, and was courted in return.

Cooper's character and conduct were as opposite as possible. Frank, fearless, and careless, he soon made friends, but they were the younger and less influential portion of the population. He had refused an engagement to play inferior parts in London, and the great parts were already assigned to another in Philadelphia. Discontent was the consequence. He had engaged for three years, at four, five, and six guineas a week, for forty weeks, with insured benefits to the amount of one hundred and fifty guineas. When the time arrived for his first benefit the seats were not taken, and, although insured by the management, he felt mortified at the prospect of playing to a slender audience, and bethinking of an elephant that had just arrived in town, he engaged it for the occasion, and its appearance on the stage procured him an overflowing house. Mr. Wignell brought his company to New-York in the ensuing summer, and there, at a temporary theatre in Greenwich Street, Mr. Cooper made his *début* in that city as *Pierre*, in "Venice Preserved," with very great success, on the 23d of August, 1797, with Mr. Moreton as *Jaffier*, and the celebrated Mrs. Merry as *Belvidera*. The combined

attraction produced a receipt exceeding one thousand dollars, an amount not often obtained at that early period.

Although he does not appear to have had the choice of many characters peculiarly adapted to his powers, Mr. Cooper made a powerful impression on New-York theatre-goers in the few in which he was permitted to appear — viz.: *Shylock*; *Chamont*, in “The Orphan”; *Hastings*, in “Jane Shore”; *Harry Dornton*, in “The Road to Ruin”; *Hamlet*—in which he was so enthusiastically received that he repeated it for his benefit;— and *Columbus*, in the first representation of Morton’s drama of that name.

He and his manager, however, were at open variance. Wignell was offended at his inattention to business of the second class, and Cooper was dissatisfied with Fennell’s usually assigned position above him. On the company’s return to Philadelphia their differences increased, and Mr. Cooper, making a visit to New-York in January, 1798, was solicited by a number of gentlemen, who preferred him to all tragedians they had hitherto seen, to perform one night for their gratification in the John Street Theatre. Asking Mr. Wignell’s permission, it was refused, but notwithstanding, Mr. Cooper, on the 5th of January, personated the requested character of *Pierre*, with Hodgkinson as *Jaffier* and Mrs. Melmoth as *Belvidera*; and, on the 6th, he played *Penraddock*, in “The Wheel of Fortune.” The receipts on each occasion were but moderate, many of the New-York public fearing the safety of the old John Street building, and the entire theatrical portion of the

community anxiously awaiting the opening of the new theatre in Park Row, which, afterward long known as the leading dramatic temple of the Union, after many vexatious delays, was finally dedicated as a place of amusement on the 29th of January, 1798.

Mr. Cooper, now finding it impossible to continue under the management of Mr. Wignell, was urged by his friends in New-York to connect himself with the theatre in that city; but his Philadelphia engagement having been made with a forfeiture of £500 sterling if broken, these generous friends made up that sum, with which Mr. Cooper proceeded to Philadelphia, and there in the presence of two witnesses formally tendered it to Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, jointly and severally, who refused to accept it. They afterwards sent for Cooper, who declined to return but offered Mr. Dallas, their attorney, \$1200, which was rejected, pressing him to pay the whole sum and receive a discharge. Cooper, declining any further negotiation, returned to New-York with the money, and on the 28th of February, 1798, made his first appearance at the Park Theatre as *Hamlet*, with Mrs. Hodgkinson's *Ophelia*, to \$895. The young actor was received with enthusiasm, and it was said with probable truth by Mr. Dunlap, the manager, that *Hamlet* had never before been so well personated in America. He was at once acknowledged as the unrivaled tragic hero of the day; and on the boards of the Park Theatre, following *Hamlet*, he was in succession during that season the first representative of *King John*, *Romeo*, *Young Norval* (in "Douglas"), *Macbeth*, *Lord Hastings* (in "Jane

# New Theatre.

To the Public.

Mr. COOPER, by certain unfortunate circumstances, being prevented from the future exercise of his profession for nearly the term of two years, unless he pays the penalty of his article to Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, the managers of this Theatre propose to appropriate this his first night's performance toward the discharge of the same.

This Evening, February 28th (1798)

Will be presented

A favourite TRAGEDY, Called

## HAMLET,

Prince of Denmark.

HAMLET.....MR. COOPER

(His first appearance in this Theatre.)

|                              |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| King.....Mr. Faucit          | Bernardo.....Mr. Seymour         |
| Horatio.....Mr. Martin       | Francisco.....Mr. Leonard        |
| Lacertes.....Mr. Hallam, Jr. | 1st Gravedigger.....Mr. Prigmore |
| Polonius.....Mr. Johnson     | 2d Gravedigger.....Mr. Lee       |
| Rosencrantz.....Mr. Hogg     | The Ghost.....Mr. Hallam         |
| Guiltenstern.....Mr. Miller  | Queen.....Mrs. Melmoth           |
| Osrick.....Mr. Jefferson     | Player Queen.....Mrs. Brett      |
| Player King.....Mr. Tyler    | And Ophelia. Mrs. Hodgkinson     |

To which will be added

A Musical Entertainment, called The

## ADOPTED CHILD

MICHAEL.....MR. COOPER

The Box-Office, for the present, will be held as usual in John Street; where places for the Boxes will be let every day, from ten to one, and on the Play Day from three to four in the Afternoon.

Subscribers will be made acquainted with the mode adopted for their admission, by application at the Box-Office.

No name can be registered on the box-book, unless certificates for the number of seats wanted are taken at the time of application.

The offensive practice to Ladies, and dangerous one to the House, of smoking segars during the Performance, it is hoped every Gentleman will consent to an absolute prohibition of.

Doors will be opened at five, and the curtain drawn up a quarter past six o'clock.



Shore"), and *Bajazet*, in the now forgotten tragedy of "Tamerlane." In comedy he was the original performer there of *Howard*, in "The Will," *Harry Dornton*, in "The Road to Ruin," and *Belcour*, in "The West Indian." He also played in Morton's drama called "Zorinski," M. P. Andrews's "Mysteries of the Castle," and Boaden's play of "The Italian Monk." He was still negligent of secondary characters, and frequently was obliged painfully to listen to the prompter.

In Dunlap's so-called tragedy of "André," first performed March 30th, 1798, Hodgkinson personated the title rôle, while the character of *Bland*, the next in importance, was assigned to Cooper, who gave but little of the author's blank verse in its original smoothness, and in the most pathetic scene of the play, after repeating, "Oh, André! Oh, André!" again and again, fell on the unfortunate hero's neck in unutterable sorrow, cried loud enough to be heard at the side scene, "damn the prompter! what's next, Hodgkinson?" to the great annoyance of the audience, the author, and his fellow actor.

At the close of the New-York season, Mr. Cooper, with a portion of the New-York company, was taken to Boston by Mr. Hodgkinson, where, on the 27th of July, 1798, he made his first appearance as *Hamlet*. The usual summer scourge at that period, yellow fever, having also just made its appearance there, the theatre was deserted, and Mr. Cooper's performance was for one night only.

The prevalence in New-York of the same dreaded

epidemic prevented the re-opening of its theatre until the third of December, and Mr. Cooper was to have made his reëntree there on the 7th, as *Hamlet*; but while dressing for the character of *Ophelia*, Mrs. Oldmixon, its intended representative, was taken suddenly ill, and the performance was postponed.

The manager, Dunlap, fortunately had in preparation a drama, written by himself and founded on Kotzebue's play of "The Stranger," which he was enabled to produce on the 10th, with Cooper as the hero, and the stately Mrs. Barrett as *Mrs. Haller*. This play has since been supplanted by Thompson's translation for the English stage, but its merits were highly spoken of at the time, and Mrs. Merry, the first tragedienne of that day in America, preferred it to its imported successor. Its triumph was complete, for, fortunately, Mr. Cooper had well studied his part, produced great effect therein, and repeated it eleven times during the season. He appeared with applause in his previous representations, and also enacted the original ones of *Yorick*, in Dunlap's "Sterne's Maria," *Frederick*, in "Lovers' Vows," and *Count Benyowski*, in Dunlap's play of that name; taking for his benefit on the 3d of June, 1799, *Coriolanus* and *Don Juan*, in the serious pantomime of that name.

For the next season Mr. Cooper's salary was advanced from \$25 to \$32 per week, and his first appearance was made as *Macbeth*, November 27th, 1799. His first original character was that of *Wieland*, in Dunlap's "False Shame," which he repeated several times. He was also the first representative of

*Edward Smith*, in Dunlap's very successful comedy called "The Force of Calumny," February 5th, 1800. About this time he went to Philadelphia to settle the long protracted business of his breach of articles with Wignell and Reinagle, and, having taken offense from their attorney, demanded satisfaction, and delayed his return to New-York, which had confidently been expected on a certain date. He was announced in the bills two nights in succession, and when the plays had to be changed and apologies made for his absence in a tone which he thought injurious to him, he at once determined to leave the company.

Mr. Dunlap supposes that in addition to the above cause, Mr. Cooper had become dissatisfied with Mr. Hodgkinson's high standing with the audience and his more frequent appearance in the manager's translations from the German, than his own in Shakespeare's heroes; and that as his consequence decreased, his carelessness increased, and his characters were often marred by his ignorance even of the words of his author.

He now resumed his position in his lately detested Philadelphia theatre, and settled his previous difficulties with his managers by agreeing to perform *Alexander the Great*, a character which he had hitherto refused, but in which he was very warmly received on the play being produced there with unusual care and splendor. He also personated *Earl Osmond*, in the "Castle Spectre," several times with very great success.

In the summer of that year, A. D. 1800, he appeared at the first theatre ever erected in Washington, D. C.,

enacting *Pierre* to Wignell's *Jaffier*, and Mrs. Merry's *Belvidera*, in "Venice Preserved," and also *Romeo* to the lady's *Juliet*.

Mr. Cooper continued in Philadelphia until the summer of 1801, when he was reëngaged for a short starring season in New-York with Mrs. Merry, whose services commanded a weekly salary of \$100, while his were valued at only \$30. Having arranged their previous difficulties, he was finally engaged by Mr. Dunlap for the regular season of 34 weeks at the advanced rate of \$50, and appeared on its opening night, November 16th, as *Frederick*, in "Lovers' Vows." His return was cordially welcomed, and he soon re-instated himself in the favor of the audience. His strictly new characters during this season were, *Frederick*, in the comedy of "The Poor Gentleman," which he performed nine times, and *Ulric*, in "Adelmorn, the Outlaw," in which he admirably supported Hodgkinson in the leading character.

He was also in the same company during the ensuing season of 1802-3, growing constantly in favor with box, pit, and gallery, by which designations the different divisions of the auditorium were then distinguished. His principal new character at this time was *Peter the Great*, in a play of that title, which attained no remarkable success. On the 5th of January, 1803, he took a farewell benefit, in the character of *Macbeth*, previous to his departure for Europe, his original rival in America, Fennell, consenting to act on the occasion the subordinate one of *Macduff*. The packet in which he was to sail being detained, he gave three additional per-

FOR THE BENEFIT OF  
**Mr. COOPER.**

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Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.  
This present FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 1803.  
Their Majesties Servants will perform a Tragedy called

**O T H E L L O.**

Duke of Venice, Mr. MADDOCKS,  
Brabantio, Mr. POWELL,  
Gratiano, Mr. CAULFIELD,  
Lodovico, Mr. PACKER,  
Othello, Mr. COOPER,

From the PHILADELPHIA, and NEW YORK Theatres  
(Being His Fifth Appearance on this Stage.)

Caffio, Mr. C. KEMBLE,  
Iago, Mr. COOKE,  
By permission of the PROPRIETORS of the THEATRE ROYAL,  
COVENT GARDEN.

(Being his First Appearance on this Stage.)  
Roderigo, Mr. RUSSELL,  
Montano, Mr. HOLLAND,  
Officers, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GIBBONS,  
Julio, Mr. RHODES, Antonio, Mr. COOKE,  
Messenger, Mr. FISHER, Sailor, Mr. WEBB,

Desdemona, Mrs. POPE,  
Emilia, Mrs. ANSELL,  
(Being her First Appearance in that Character.)  
To which will be added a Musical Farce called

**OF AGE TO-MORROW,**

Baron Willinghurst, Mr. BANNISTER, Jun.  
Baron Piffleberg, (First Time) Mr. PURSER,  
Hans Molkus, Mr. WEWITZER,  
Hair Dresser, Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH,  
Servant, Mr. EVANS,  
Lady Brumback, Mrs. SPARKS,  
Sophia, Miss STEPHENS,  
Maria, Miss DE CAMP,

VIVANT REX ET REGINA!

C. LOWNDES, Printer, (66) Drury-Lane



formances, making his last appearance on the 8th in his most admired representation of *Hamlet*.

Mr. John Kemble having this season retired from Drury Lane Theatre, the management was desirous of finding a competent substitute, and numerous reports of Mr. Cooper's success in America having reached its ears, an invitation was extended him to try his fortune once more on the metropolitan stage. He made his first appearance at this great establishment on the 7th of March, 1803, as *Hamlet*, in which character he was so favorably received, that it was soon after repeated. He also sustained *Macbeth* and *Richard III.* with decided approbation, but to slender audiences, and failing to attract well filled houses, he was laid aside, and employed his time in playing at Manchester, Liverpool, and other cities. He however received a benefit at Drury Lane, on the 10th of June, 1803, when he appeared as *Othello*, being honored with the support of George Frederick Cooke as *Iago*, who came from Covent Garden in his behalf, while Charles Kemble was the personator of *Cassio*. His benefit and last appearance during this tour took place at Liverpool on the 22d of September, 1804, when he appeared as *Pierre*, in the tragedy of "Venice Preserved," with the aid of the afterwards distinguished Charles Young as *Jaffier*, and Miss Grimani as *Belvidera*.

## CHAPTER III.

1804-1810.

Mr. Cooper's return to New-York was rapturously welcomed, and his reëntree at the Park Theatre was made on the 19th of November, as *Macbeth*, to a house of \$950, surpassed on the 23d by the attraction of \$1080 to his *Hamlet*. His engagement was for twelve nights, the terms being an equal share of the receipts with the manager after deducting the night's expenses, with a clear benefit at the close. The average nightly receipts amounted to \$750; the benefit, with the play of "King John," brought \$883. Two additional nights were given with *Romeo* to \$440, and *Othello* to \$558. It must be remembered that the city's population at this period did not exceed 75,000, and that performances were given but thrice a week.

Mr. Cooper's first appearance in Boston after his unfortunate discomfiture there in 1798 took place on the 11th of March, 1805, with triumphant success, and though he met with some criticism, his benefit with his performance of *Rolla*, in "Pizarro," attracted \$1050, in a city whose population was then less than half that of New-York. With the Boston company he also appeared at Providence, R. I., where he played *Othello* for his benefit.

During the season of 1805-6, Mr. Cooper was principally employed at Boston, where in February, 1806, he first attempted the character of *Sir John Falstaff*, in "King Henry IV." A contemporary critic said that his disguise of voice and person was complete, and that his delivery of the language of the part was so perfect that not a word was lost, and that nothing was wanting to make it a masterpiece of comic excellence but ease, which frequent practice alone could impart. Regret however was expressed that the first tragedian of the day should descend to the representation of so gross a character.

A poetical Review of the Thespian Corps of Boston, published at the close of the season, winds up with the following lines :

" But, last of all, see COOPER grace the stage—  
COOPER,—' the pride, the wonder of our age !'  
Here place thy laurel, crown him with thy bays,  
Nor aim to praise him WHO'S BEYOND ALL PRAISE."

During the season New-York and Philadelphia were visited as usual. The critics of the latter city had so far advanced their opinion of the actor's ability that the following lines from Churchill's "Rosciad," originally applied to Garrick, were published in the "Philadelphia Gazette," March 18th, 1806, with the name of Cooper substituted :

" If manly sense — if nature linked with art ;  
If thorough knowledge of the human heart ;  
If powers of acting, vast and unconfined ;  
If fewer faults and greater beauties joined ;

If strong expression and strange powers which lie  
Within the magic circle of the eye ;  
If feelings which few hearts like his can know,  
And which no face so well as his can show,  
Deserve the preference — COOPER, take the chair,  
Nor quit it till thou place an equal there."

On the 14th of April, 1806, Mr. Cooper made his début at Charleston, S. C., in the character of *Hamlet*, which by some of the critics there was supposed to be inferior to its previous representations by Hodgkinson. He was very warmly received, however, and more highly appreciated in his succeeding characters, which carried his engagement through a period of five weeks,—three night performances a week, as in other cities. Society in Charleston was perhaps more congenial to his feelings than in more northerly centres, and he was as eagerly sought after there in private as he was admired in public, and to the last of his existence he probably had a greater affection for that city and its inhabitants than any other in America.

Returning homeward, he also played in Richmond and Petersburg, Va., probably for the first time.

In the fall of 1806, Mr. Cooper became the lessee of the Park Theatre, New-York (bearing at the time the simple designation Theatre), and opened on the 6th of October with the tragedy of "Richard III.," in which he modestly appeared as the *Earl of Richmond* to Mr. Fennell's admired representation of the hunchbacked tyrant. To make the attraction irresistible during the latter's engagement, Mr. Cooper also appeared as *Iago*, *Hotspur*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Penruddock*, *Beverley*,

*Octavian*, and *Shylock*, to Mr. Fennell's *Othello*, *King Henry IV.*, *Ghost*, *Iago*, *Woodville*, *Stukely*, *Bulchazin Muley*, and *Bassanio*—a degree of complaisance on Mr. Fennell's part worthy of special notice. During the season, Mr. Cooper for the first time added the *Duke Aranza*, in the comedy of "The Honeymoon," to his list of parts. In January, 1807, Mr. Cooper played in Boston, and after his departure, the languishing state of the theatre caused the following conundrum to appear in the "Boston Sentinel":

"Why is the Boston Stage like an old cask? Because it is falling to pieces for want of a Cooper!"

Encouraged by the success of his first year of management, Mr. Cooper, the next season, had the whole interior of the theatre remodeled and embellished in a style far superior to any before seen in America. And he writes to his then intimate friend Washington Irving, at Richmond, Virginia, soliciting an opening address which he had promised for the previous season, but had neglected to complete.

"NEW-YORK, July 9, 1807.

"DEAR IRVING: I wrote you from Baltimore—I think on the 23d ultimo—to which I have received no answer, and am induced to repeat my application to jog your memory and your industry in relation to the opening of the theatre. If your mind or person is too much engaged to attend any further to the business, at least let me prevail in an application for the whole of what was completed last year, and I will contrive to patch together some means of introducing it. An immediate attention to this request is of impor-

tance to me. The theatre will be most superb and the best out of France and Italy, and will open in the first week of September. Yours most truly,

“THOMAS A. COOPER.”

This procured the desired return, which was delivered by Mr. Cooper at the opening of the theatre on the 9th of September, 1807, and is now included in Hutton's collection of “Opening Addresses,” published by the Dunlap Society, of New-York.

A more humorous epistle than the foregoing, from Cooper to Irving, had been written not long before in a half-poetical strain. While playing at Richmond, Cooper was requested to give the part of *Beverley*, in “The Gamester,” but lacking the necessary equipment of small-clothes, he borrowed a pair from Mr. Irving, which he afterwards carried off to Baltimore. Here he discovered in the pocket a locket of hair in the shape of a heart, which he returned with a letter concluding with the following lines:

“Receive these enquiries, dear friend, in good part,  
And since you have locked the fair hair in your heart,  
Ne'er trust, of the girl who your fancy bewitches,  
Such an emblem of love in another man's breeches.”

Mr. Cooper's first personation in the newly-decorated theatre was on the 14th of September, when he appeared as the *Duke Aranza*, and he continued giving his popular representations until early in January, when the establishment was closed in consequence of the death of his wife on the 9th of that month.

In the burying-ground of Trinity Church, New

York, is still standing a simple stone with the following inscription :

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
JOANNA COOPER,  
Wife of Thomas A. Cooper,  
Who departed this life January 9th, 1808,  
AGED 38 YEARS AND 7 MONTHS.

At the time of the lady's marriage to Cooper she was the widow of Captain Upton, a naval officer, and daughter of David Johnson, Esq., of New-York. A son and two daughters were the fruits of this union, who all died in early childhood.

The New-York theatre remained closed during the balance of the month, but on the 25th Mr. Cooper commenced an engagement at Boston, and on the 26th of February re-appeared in New-York as the rattling *Charles Surface*, in "The School for Scandal," a rather noticeable selection for a newly-made widower.

Towards the end of the season, on the 30th of March, the fine, musical ballet-pantomime of "Cinderella" was announced for its first performance. Much attention was required on the part of the orchestra, but many of its members had been very negligent at rehearsals, and had been notified of forfeitures for non-attendance, etc. On this evening a large audience had assembled, when Mr. Everdell, the orchestra leader, was informed by one of the band that none of the force would play a note until the whole sum forfeited by their absence should be refunded. The leader rushed to Cooper's room and unfolded the plot. Cooper coolly

asked, "Can you play the music?" "Why, yes, sir; I have been practicing it for three weeks." Mr. Cooper immediately informed the audience of the situation, and offered the return of their money, or the performance of the ballet with a single violin, which latter alternative was generally accepted, and the piece received with the greatest enthusiasm. The strikers were summarily dismissed, and, withdrawing the piece for a few days, it was reproduced with a new and splendid band to a long succession of full houses.

It was remarked at the time that Cooper the manager and Cooper the actor were two different persons — that the carelessness which the latter sometimes displayed was never observable in the conduct of the former, and that though never overbearing in his requirements of his subordinates, he still insisted on the faithful performance of their every duty, and the fulfillment of their every agreement, and was alike honorably punctual in all his business arrangements and engagements.

Still highly popular with his audience, in the fall of 1808 he connected with himself, as co-manager, Mr. Stephen Price, a well-known man of fashion in New-York, who afterwards became the lessee of Drury Lane, London. His first appearance for the season of 1808-9 was made on the 12th of September as *Charles de Moor*, in Schiller's "Robbers," and he continued playing almost every alternate night during its course in New-York, the intermediate ones being given to Philadelphia, between which cities he usually traveled by his own horse and gig. His first new part in New-York

was that of *Cheviot*, in Kenney's comedy of "The World," on the 24th of October, followed on the 14th of November by *Guiscard*, in Monk Lewis's tragedy of "Adelgitha," which he played also for his benefit on the 10th of December, to a house of \$810. His benefit in Philadelphia the same season brought upwards of \$1000.

On the 24th of February, 1809, he presented to the public the youthful aspirant, John Howard Payne, as *Douglas*, whose success for a few seasons, both in Europe and America, gave him the envied title of the Juvenile American Roscius.

The ensuing season, 1809-10, he opened with *Rolla*, in "Pizarro," and before its end substituted the character of *Michael Ducas*, in "Adelgitha," for that of *Guiscard*, which he had hitherto performed, and also undertook that of *De Montfort*, in Joanna Baillie's remarkable tragedy of that name, which unfortunately has never proved a popular success, even when Kemble and the Siddons united in its performance. Mr. Cooper made his last appearance for the season on the 6th of June, 1810, as *Duke Aranza*, in "The Honey-moon."

Immediately after, he sailed for England, where he appeared with success in Liverpool, Manchester, and other cities, though apparently not in London.

His appearance at the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, was announced in the following terms: "The public are most respectfully informed that MR. COOPER, proprietor and manager of the Theatre in New-York, and whose Theatrical celebrity there for some years past

has been unrivaled, is engaged at this Theatre for EIGHT NIGHTS ONLY, and his first appearance for these seven years will be on this present Monday, September 10th, 1810, in the Historical Play of "KING RICHARD III."

Of course he was the personator of the usurping hero, while the conquering *Earl of Richmond* was in the hands of Mr. Rae, afterwards a prominent favorite at Drury Lane, where in 1815 he supported Mr. Kean in the same character. Among other performers in the play were Mr. Drake—who was soon after well known in Boston, and also one of the earliest pioneers of the Western stage,—Mr. Maywood as the *Lord Mayor*, Mr. Caldwell as *Sir William Brandon*, and Mr. McFarland as the *Duke of Norfolk*, whose names are all familiar to American readers of theatrical history, not forgetting Mrs. Beaumont as *Queen Elizabeth*, who soon after starred with success in New-York, Boston, and Philadelphia. Mr. Cooper here achieved his highest stroke of managerial policy in the engagement of George Frederick Cooke for an American tour.

For Messrs. Powell and Dickson of the Boston theatre he also secured the services of Mr. and Mrs. Duff, long known and esteemed as artists of the highest grade in all our leading theatres.

To the many animadversions made in the English papers on Cooke's engagement by Mr. Cooper, who was charged with inducing him to enter it while in an inebriated condition, the following letter in reply was written for publication :

“LIVERPOOL, Oct. 7, 1810.

“SIR: — I have been fortunate in engaging Mr. Cooke, of Covent Garden Theatre, to play under my direction in America, and on Thursday last he sailed from this port to New-York. The reason of my troubling you with this letter is, that an absurd and calumnious report has obtained in Liverpool (owing, I presume, to the negotiations having been carried on with secrecy, and his intentions not having been known until he had actually departed) that I had prevailed with Mr. Cooke to quit England, when he was prevented by inebriety from exerting his judgment and free will upon the occasion. It is possible that this slander may reach London, and, as Mr. Cooke is an object of considerable public interest, may find its way into the journals. I assure you, on my word of honour, that this is an absolute falsehood; that the negotiation for the engagement under which Mr. Cooke has embarked was commenced about the 6th of August last, and was completed on the 3d instant, in the moment of perfect sobriety, and entire understanding of all the arrangements; that the secrecy that attended the mode of embarkation was only to prevent the solicitation of his friends in Liverpool, which might distress him, and which he determined to avoid, as he was resolved upon the step he was about to take. My object is to request that if such falsehoods as I have hinted at should find their way into the London papers, you will have the goodness to dedicate a portion of your paper to a denial of the allegation. Requesting you will pardon the intrusion,

“I am, etc.,

“THOMAS A. COOPER.”

Mr. Dunlap gives the terms of Mr. Cooke's engagement to be twenty-five guineas a week for ten months,

to play at New-York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, with a benefit at each place, and twenty-five cents a mile for traveling expenses between the above-mentioned places; his passage over the Atlantic being paid by Mr. Cooper.

## CHAPTER IV.

1810-1821.

Mr. Cooke made his re-appearance in New-York on the 21st of November, 1810, as *Richard III.*, to \$1820, the largest receipt at that time ever taken for one night's performance.\* In addition to the tickets for pit and gallery, 1358 were sold for the boxes, and the engagement proved a great professional and pecuniary success.

On the 8th of April, 1811, Mr. Cooper, on his return from England, was welcomed in the character of *Hamlet* by a house of \$1270, and on the 6th of May, when he personated *Richmond* to Cooke's *Richard*, the receipts were \$1380, advanced on the 8th by

\* This amount (inferior to that of his ensuing benefit, which realized \$1878) was exceeded in this theatre but twice afterwards at regular prices (\$1 to boxes, 50 cents to pit),—once by Mr. Forrest's performance of "The Gladiator," September 12th, 1836, shortly after his return from Europe, when the receipts reached \$1821; and once on the occasion of Mr. Placide's benefit, when he perpetrated *Iago* to John Reeve's *Othello*, June 24th, 1836, when they attained to the sum of \$1833. The Kembles, the Woods, Tyrone Power, or Fanny Elssler, never attracted an equal amount. The elder Kean's first and most successful engagement was played in the small theatre in Anthony (now Worth) Street, when the Park Theatre was in ruins, or probably he would have overtopped them all.

Cooper's *Othello* and Cooke's *Iago* to \$1620. He also played four nights in Philadelphia, as *Beverley*, *Jaffier*, and *Othello* (twice), with Mr. Cooke as *Stukely*, *Pierre*, and *Iago*, to houses averaging \$1325; and closed the season in Baltimore on the 10th of June, as *Hotspur*, to Cooke's *Falstaff*, to \$901.

Mr. Cooper resumed playing in New-York on the 2d of September, 1811, as *Young Norval* to Cooke's *Glenalvon*, in Home's tragedy of "Douglas," apparently performing on alternate nights at Philadelphia; and on the 2d of October, in New-York, first enacted the character of *Cardinal Wolsey* to Cooke's *King Henry VIII.*, which he would have repeated on the 7th, but was prevented by one of Mr. Cooke's peculiar attacks of indisposition. In February, 1812, he very oddly undertook the representation of *Old Dornton* in Holcroft's comedy of "The Road to Ruin," giving up his hitherto admired part of *Harry Dornton* to Edmund Simpson, then a favorite actor in juvenile comedy, and afterwards long the lessee of the Park Theatre.

In April, Mr. Cooper brought out with much success J. N. Barker's dramatization of Scott's "Marmion," announcing, or leaving it to be inferred by the audience, that it was a transatlantic production, which he felt confident would insure it a more flattering reception than if known to be by a native author. He himself represented the hero for several nights, and then resigned it also to Mr. Simpson. The same ruse was practiced by Mr. Wood at Philadelphia, which secured for the play a most prosperous run, until its authorship was discovered.

The summit of Mr. Cooper's social ambition was reached this year on the 11th of June, when he was united in marriage to Miss Mary Fairlie, one of the most beautiful and accomplished belles of New-York, the eldest daughter of the celebrated wit and brave officer of the Revolution, Major James Fairlie, and grand-daughter of Robert Yates, Chief Justice of the State of New-York.\*

About this time, Mr. Cooper,— still basking in the brightest sunshine of popular favor, and a welcome guest in the highest family circles, — and his theatrical partner, Stephen Price, established themselves in two elegant adjoining houses (afterwards thrown into one and called the Carlton House), on the north-east corner of Broadway and Leonard street, then one of the most fashionable sections of the city. Here they lived in a style of the most sumptuous elegance, entertaining their friends beyond the bounds of true hospitality, and attracting around them from the first professional and literary sources all who were fond of the wine, wit, and jovial companionship of two good fellows like themselves.

\* The three daughters of Major Fairlie, endowed with the sterling intellect, the glowing genius, and fanciful humor of both parents, inherited from their mother great personal beauty, and were the reigning toasts of their day. Mrs. Cooper is immortalized as *Sophy Sparkle*, in Irving's "Salmagundi;" — the second sister, Louisa, fully equaled her both in beauty and brilliancy, and was especially idolized by the poet, Halleck, but she never married; — the youngest, Julia, became the second wife of Samuel G. Ogden, Esq., father of the late charming authoress and actress, Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt.

The Park Theatre was re-opened by Messrs. Cooper and Price early in September, 1812, and on the 28th of the month they first introduced to an American audience, the distinguished London actor, Joseph George Holman, in the character of *Hamlet*. He was received with great favor, and on the 3d of October, his daughter, Miss Holman (afterwards Mrs. Gilfert), made her debut as *Lady Townly*, in "The Provoked Husband," her rendering of the character resulting in triumphant success.

On the 26th they appeared as *Othello* and *Desdemona*, Mr. Cooper making his first appearance for the season as *Iago*. He continued playing in New-York until the middle of January, 1813, when he commenced a long engagement in Philadelphia, followed by one in Boston, where for ten nights' service he received \$1878.62. With the exception of the admired performances of the Holmans, often accompanied by the assistance of Mr. Cooper, the New-York season had no special subject of notice.

The next season was commenced on the 13th of September, 1813, and Mr. Cooper re-appeared on the 20th as *Macbeth*, following it with a long succession of favorite parts, and enacting for the first time on the 5th of November, that of *Captain Manly*, in Wycherly's revised play of "The Plaindealer," which did not prove a lasting success. This was soon after followed by his performance of *Don Ordonio*, in Coleridge's tragedy of "Remorse," which likewise proved unattractive, although his acting was highly praised.

Audiences then demanded a constant change in successive performances, and managers had no anticipation of a period when a play could be successfully run from fifty to a hundred nights.

A powerful opposition was experienced this season, both by Mr. Cooper as an actor, and by the Park Theatre in a business way, by the opening as a theatrical commonwealth of the Circus building, corner of Broadway and White street, by a fine company of professionals, under the general management of Messrs. Twaits, Gilfert, and Holland; the first, a comedian of great merit; the second, a musician of distinguished eminence; and the last, at that time a scenic artist of unequalled taste and skill. Gilfert, it will be remembered, was afterwards the first manager of the Bowery Theatre, New-York, in 1826. The company consisted of Mr. and Miss Holman, Mr. and Mrs. Twaits, Mr. and Mrs. Burke, Mrs. Goldson, Mr. Bernard, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Caulfield, Mr. Waring, and other artists of repute.

This array of prominent talent so divided the patronage of the public for three months that, although each house put forth its best efforts, little profit resulted to either, and on the 10th of January, 1814, the newcomers drew off their forces and removed to Philadelphia. The Park managers endeavored in vain to entice Miss Holman from the concern by an offer of \$200 per night for seven nights' engagement, but the commonwealth immediately advanced her salary to the same amount, although its patronage was not sufficient to continue it.

Mr. Cooper commenced the season of 1814-15, at New-York, in the character of *Macbeth*, followed by an engagement of eleven nights at Philadelphia, which drew an average of \$611 each, and ending in Providence, R. I., in July, 1815, with *Hamlet*, *Leon*, etc.

About this time he retired from the management of the Park Theatre, New-York, leaving its direction entirely in the hands of his late partner, Mr. Price, and devoting his whole time to the fulfillment of starring engagements. His appearance in New-York was deferred until the 6th of November, 1815, when he made his reëntree there as *Hamlet*, and closed his engagement on the 24th of the month as *Zanga*, in "The Revenge." On the 20th of January, 1816, he opened in Philadelphia as *Hamlet*, to \$987; played *Charles Surface* and *Petruchio* on the 31st to \$1261; and made his final appearance there on the 3d of February as *Benedick*, to \$1146. His performances in comedy at this time proved to be more attractive than his tragic representations. New-York, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Baltimore, and Charleston, continued to be visited in succession by Mr. Cooper, with bounteously successful results, for several succeeding years, and occasionally a new character was added to his list.

In New-York, in 1816, he first embodied that of *Bertram*, in Maturin's tragedy of that name; and in 1818 his *Mark Antony*, in "Julius Cæsar," proved to be a most admired performance in all the northern cities. In the same year he first enacted *Amurath*, in Shiel's tragedy of "Bellamira"; and in November, 1819, he added greatly to his reputation by his first assump-

tion of *Lucius Junius Brutus*, in Payne's compilation of "Brutus." In 1820 his superb performance of *Virginus* was received with the most unbounded applause, and was generally considered as his greatest achievement, until it was surpassed by his still greater success as *Damon*. In Barry Cornwall's tragedy of "Mirandola," he first assumed the character of its hero at Boston, in 1821; but the piece never became popular.

## CHAPTER V.

1822-1827.

In 1822, Mr. Cooper visited New Orleans, making his first appearance there on the 6th of February, in one of his least admired characters, *Richard III.*, which did not equal the anticipations of his audience, who had already seen Booth; but it was given because it was the only character in which the stock company were prepared for his support. His next assumption, *Othello*, greatly raised their estimation of his abilities; and on the 13th, when he gave his magnificent representation of *Damon*, in Banim's "Damon and Pythias," — a performance which was pronounced perfect by every critic of the day, and has been the model of every subsequent representative of the character, Forrest included, he was hailed as the highest exponent of dramatic art that Southern eyes had ever looked on. His original engagement at New Orleans was for sixteen nights, at \$200 per night; but its success warranted a continuance until it reached twenty-four, the average receipts per night being \$700, which filled the utmost capacity of the house.

In December, Mr. Cooper first gave his assumption of *Damon* to the public of New-York and Philadelphia, where it was received with equal demonstrations of approval and delight. His portraiture of *Damon* Mr.

Wemyss called a masterpiece of art, and said that until he saw it he would not admit Mr. Cooper's claim to rank as an actor of the highest merit, but after that performance he was convinced that he was capable of any effort required from a man of genius, and that his then great popularity was justly merited.

Mr. Cooper was probably now at the highest point of his professional career, and while his original performance of any succeeding new character never resulted in the same universal expression of approbation, his repeated personations of well-known heroes of the older drama had lost the gloss of novelty, and began to be compared with those of others, and frequently to his disadvantage. Thus Cooke had entirely eclipsed him in *Richard*; Kean overtopped him in *Shylock*; Wallack outshone him in *Rolla*; Booth gained laurels in parts that he never ventured to attempt; and Holman had fully equaled him in the highest line of genteel comedy. As Mr. Macready has since said, every prominent newcomer lessens the attractiveness of a previous favorite, and although Mr. Cooper was still considered as the supreme theatrical idol of America, he had been seen so often in Northern cities that his engagements began to be less remunerative, both to the managers and to himself.

In 1823, Mr. Cooper revived a character he had attempted ten years before, that of *Don Ordonio*, in Coleridge's tragedy of "Remorse," and though his rendering was highly extolled by the critics of Boston, New-York, and Philadelphia, it did not result in securing a long popularity for the piece.

During this year he again visited New Orleans, and played an engagement at Natchez, where, as the theatre was small, the price of admission was doubled on his nights.

In the fall, he played very long engagements at New-York and Boston, presenting for the first time Hayne's tragedy of "Durazzo," with himself as the hero. This was followed by his appearance for many nights in Philadelphia, where, on the first of January, 1824, he first enacted the part of *Selim*, in the elegant melodrama founded on Byron's "Bride of Abydos," supported by Mr. and Mrs. Duff as *Giaffier* and *Zulieka*.

Of the performance of the two principal male characters, Mr. Charles Durang has given a most amusing account, in his History of the Philadelphia Stage, of which the following is an abstract: "Cooper played now for all the money he could make—fame he had already acquired—and ranted away without rhyme or reason, with his powerful voice, which was sure to secure applause. Duff was comparatively worn out, but he still possessed his admirable, mellifluous voice, and although his limbs halted, he even, if possible, out-ranted Cooper. While he was on the stage, Cooper would step to the wing, and attentively listen. In his laconic manner he would quietly exclaim: 'What is that all about? Such shouting I never heard! He drowns the poetry in senseless noise and bombast!'

"By and by, Cooper would be on the stage, and give one of *Selim's* impassioned speeches, with all the powers of his very powerful organ, and down would

come thunders of applause. Duff, behind the scenes, would listen in his turn — ‘There, now, do you call that acting — did ye ever hear such shouting? By Father Murphy, I should call it the *ne plus ultra* of inflated bombast! But it is their God, Mr. Cooper, and it is all gospel!’ ”

Of Mrs. Duff’s *Zulicka*, Durang remarked that “the poetical idea of Byron’s conception was most eminently embodied by that first of tragic actresses.”

In February, 1824, Mr. Cooper, with Mr. William Augustus Conway, who had lately made his American début, commenced a joint engagement at the Park Theatre, New-York, the former playing *Pierre*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *King John*, *Joseph Surface*, *Lothario*, in “The Fair Penitent,” *Chamont*, in “The Orphan,” and *Brutus*, in “Julius Cæsar,” to the latter’s *Jaffier*, *Iago*, *Edgar*, *Falconbridge*, *Charles Surface*, *Horatio*, *Castalio*, and *Mark Antony*. They were received with great applause by crowded audiences, but the critics spoke very disparagingly of Cooper’s *Lear*. This was followed by similar engagements at Boston and Philadelphia, where they were supported at the former city by the favorite actress from New-York, Mrs. John Barnes. Their benefits indicated an equal amount of favor at the latter city, that of Mr. Cooper attracting \$888, and Mr. Conway’s \$889.

It has frequently been suggested that Mr. Cooper’s decline in attractiveness was attributable to his studying no new characters, but this is an error, for whenever a new play was produced in England he was almost sure to attempt the portrayal of it here,

as he did in February, 1825, at Philadelphia, with Knowles's "Caius Gracchus," and in New-York, in April, with the same author's "William Tell."

In January, 1826, Messrs. Cooper and Conway were again announced in conjunction at the Park Theatre, New-York, and on the occasion of the former's benefit—evidently disappointed at the smallness of his audience—Mr. Cooper announced to the few in attendance that his friends had deserted him for the more novel attraction of Italian Opera, then lately introduced by the celebrated Garcia troupe, including the afterwards matchless Madame Malibran. The powerful opposition of the then new theatre in the Bowery, with the combined powers of Forrest and Mrs. Duff, at a little later period, also tended to thin off the attendance of his admirers.

He was still, however, high in popular and critical esteem, for on the appearance of Mr. Macready in New-York, in the fall of 1826, a prominent writer remarked that the latter was an admirable actor, and *second only to Mr. Cooper.*

In the spring of 1827, Mr. Cooper played a long engagement in Mobile, and in the fall his engagement in New-York was strengthened by the assistance of Mrs. Duff in tragedy, and in comedy by the addition of Miss Lydia Kelly, to whose *Beatrice*, *Rosalind*, and *Miss Dorillon*, he, for the first time in many years, enacted *Benedick*, *Jacques*, and *Sir William Dorillon*.

## CHAPTER VI.

1827-1832.

In November Mr. Cooper played a farewell engagement in New-York, previous to his departure for London, as he was determined once more to appeal for the approval of an audience in the great metropolis.

He appeared at Drury Lane, then under the management of his old partner, Stephen Price, on the 17th of December, 1827, in the character of *Macbeth*, with Mr. James Wallack, Sr., as *Macduff*, Mr. J. Cooper as *Banquo*, and *Lady Macbeth* by Mrs. Bunn, but was received in so ungracious and discourteous a manner, with hissing and hooting, that he declined making a second appearance, for which he had been underlined, as *Othello*. His American friends attributed his failure entirely to the determination of the English public to afford no favor to American talent, whether native or naturalized, no matter of how high an order; and their subsequent treatment of Mrs. Duff, who Mr. Booth said had no equal on the British stage, tends strongly to confirm the truthfulness of that opinion.

The following extract from a letter of Washington Irving, when residing in England, may perhaps explain some of the difficulties to be encountered by those who attempted to tread the London boards at that period :

# Theatre Royal, Drury Lane,

This Evening, MONDAY, December 17, 1827,

His Majesty's Servants will perform Shakspeare's Tragedy of

## MACBETH.

Duncan, (*King of Scotland*) Mr. POWELL,  
Malcolm, Mr. YOUNGE, Donalbain, Miss WILLMOTT,  
Macbeth, ..... Mr. COOPER,  
(*From the New York Theatre.*)  
Macduff, ..... Mr. WALLACK,  
Banquo, ..... Mr. COOPER,  
Lenox, Mr. WAKEFIELD, Rosse, Mr. MUDE,  
Siward, Mr. THOMPSON, Serjeant, Mr. C. JONES,  
Lady Macbeth, ..... Mrs. BUNN,  
Gentlewoman, ..... Mrs. FIELD,  
Hecate, ..... Mr. BEDFORD,  
1st Witch, Mr. GATTIE, 2nd Witch, Mr. J. RUSSELL,  
3rd Witch, Mr. SHERWIN,  
*Singing Witches,*  
Mr. BLAND, Mr. YARNOLD, Mr. W. BENNETT, Mr. G. SMITH,  
Mr. SALTER, Mr. TAYLEURE, Master WIELAND.  
Mess. Robinson, Walsh, Beale, Nelson, East, Eaton, Henshaw, E. Vining,  
Sheriff, Jones, Tolkien, Green.  
Miss GRANT, Miss A. TREE, Miss I. PATON, Miss NICOL, Mrs.  
ORGER, Miss GOULD, Miss PINCOTT, Mrs. BEDFORD,  
Miss BROTHERS.  
Mesdms. Willmott, L. Willmott, Webster, Allen, Wills, Beeston,  
Munro, Rummens, Anderson.

To conclude with the Comic Extravaganza called

## Giovanni in London

Don Giovanni, Miss LOVE, in which character she will introduce,  
"The light Guitar," and "Had I a Heart for Falschood fram'd."  
Leporello, Mr. HARLEY,  
Mr. Deputy English, Mr. GATTIE, Mr. Florentine Finickin, Mr. WEB-  
STER, Pluto, Mr. C. JONES, Mercury, Mr. HOWELL,  
Charon, Mr. THOMPSON, Firedrake, Mr. SHERIFF, Drainem-  
dry, Mr. TAYLEURE, Porous, Mr. FENTON,  
Simpkins, Mr. SALTER, Popinjay, Mr. YARNOLD,  
Shirk, Mr. HUGHES, Snaps, Mr. G. SMITH,  
Counsellor, Mr. Vining, Lawyer, Mr. Honnor.  
Proserpine, Miss WESTON, Mrs. Leporello, Miss NICOL,  
Miss Constantia Quixotte, Mrs. BEDFORD, Mrs. English, Mrs. ORGER,

Mrs. Drainendry, Mrs. C. JONES, Mrs. Porous, Mrs. WEBSTER, Mrs.  
Simpkins, Mrs. WILLMOTT, Squalling Fan, Miss A. TREE,  
Succubus, Miss VALLANCEY, Tartarus, Mrs. GEAR.

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**In Act 1. *A MASQUERADE.***

*Principal Dancers* — Miss RYAL, Miss MACDONALD, Miss ZERBINI, Miss  
CHIKINI, &c. &c.

---

**Mr. COOPER,**

*From the NEW YORK THEATRE*, is engaged, and will make his First  
Appearance *this Evening*, in the character of *MACBETH*.

---

**ISIDORE DE MERIDA,**

Having been received on its Eighth Representation with the greatest enthu-  
siasm, will be repeated To-morrow, and Thursday next.

---

**THE LANCERS,**

Being completely successful, will be acted on Wednesday next.

---

**Madame FERON,**

Whose brilliant and distinguished Success was again hailed on Saturday last  
by an overflowing Audience, will make her Ninth Appearance  
To-morrow Evening.

---

*To-morrow, Isidore de Merida.*

With **Deaf as a Post**. Tristram Sappy, Mr. Liston.

And **Comfortable Lodgings**. Sir Hippington Miff, Mr. Liston.

*On Wednesday, Othello.* Othello, Mr. Cooper,

[ *from the New York Theatre* ]

Iago, Mr. Wallack, Cassio, Mr. Cooper, Desdemona, Mrs. W. West,

Emilia, Mrs. Bunn.

With **The Illustrious Stranger**. Bowbell, Mr. Liston. And  
the LANCERS.

*On Thursday, Isidore de Merida, for the last time previous to  
the Holidays.*

With **Deaf as a Post**. Tristram Sappy, Mr. Liston.

And **X. Y. Z.** Neddy Bray, Mr. Liston.

*On Friday* A favourite TRAGEDY.

*On Saturday, the 22nd*, Mr. LISTON'S Benefit.

THE NEW GRAND CHRISTMAS

**COMIC PANTOMIME,**

Which has been in active preparation for several months past, upon a scale of  
splendour and magnificence hitherto unprecedented, will be pro-  
duced on *Wednesday*, the 26th instant.

VIVAT REX.

No money to be returned.

J. Tabby, Printer,

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

"In certain characters, such as *Macbeth*, I do not think that Cooper has his equal in England. Young is the only actor I have seen that can be compared to him. I cannot help thinking that if Cooper had a fair chance, and the public were to see him in his principal characters, he would take the lead at once of the London theatres. But there is so much party work, managerial influence, and elaborate system of falsehood and misrepresentation connected with the London theatres, that a stranger who is not particularly favored by the managers or assisted by the prepossession of the public, stands no chance."

This was written, however, a few years before Mr. Cooper's last attempt, and Mr. Price, in a subsequent communication, asserted that Mr. Cooper's initial performance was not of an order to command approval.

A national indignation was fairly aroused by the reports received of the ill-treatment bestowed in London on Mr. Cooper, and his return to America was hailed with a warmth of enthusiasm to which, for a few years previous, he had been somewhat of a stranger.

His re-appearance was made in March, 1828, at Boston, as *Macbeth*, and was received with tumultuous applause, which followed each succeeding appearance during a very profitable engagement.

On the 8th of April he opened in New-York in the same character, and on the 10th played *Othello*, with Mr. Hackett, then a neophyte to the stage, as *Iago*. He took his benefit on the 23d, again enacting *Othello*, with the volunteered aid of Mr. Forrest as *Iago*, which brought the unusually large receipt of \$1800.

For Mr. Forrest's benefit at the Bowery on the 23d, he, returning the compliment, played *Iago*, to the beneficiary's *Othello*.

Proceeding to Philadelphia, he again commenced his engagement with *Macbeth* on the 25th of April, being continuously received with expressions of the utmost appreciation and delight.

Returning to New-York, he was engaged by Mr. Gilfert at the Bowery, where he appeared as *Pierre*, *Othello*, *Iago*, *Brutus* ("Julius Cæsar"), and *Damon*, with Mr. Forrest as *Jaffier*, *Iago*, *Othello*, *Mark Antony*, and *Pythias*; and for the benefit of the latter, who then enacted *Damon*, he took for the first time the secondary part of *Pythias*.

Engagements in other cities followed, probably closing the season with one in Providence, in the month of July, where he performed *Sir William Dorillon*, in "Wives as They Were," to the *Miss Dorillon* of the beautiful Mrs. Young, and the *Bronzely* of Mr. Archer, from the English theatres.

The excitement caused by his rebuff in London having subsided, Mr. Cooper's attractiveness again declined, and disappointed in securing an expected engagement in New-York, he took a lease of the theatre in Chatham Garden, which he opened on the 15th of September, 1828, with the following announcement :

"To the Ladies and Gentlemen of New-York. The Subscriber being professionally excluded from the boards of the Bowery Theatre, to admission to which he conceived he had peculiar claims, and not being willing to abandon

the honor of appearing before you, has taken a lease of the Chatham Theatre. He hopes that a long tried and faithful servant will not solicit in vain for a portion of the patronage, which it has been and always will be his endeavor to preserve. "THOS. A. COOPER."

His opening play was "The Honeymoon," in which he represented the *Duke Aranza*, while his partner and stage manager, Mr. N. M. Ludlow, a favorite actor from the Western theatres, personated *Rolando*. A succession of ten performances attracted crowded audiences of old friends—admission being only 50 cents,—when he then retired, to fulfill an engagement at Baltimore, his first there since his return from Europe, where he began as *Macbeth*, on the 30th of September, and also at Washington, where he commenced on the 13th of October, as *Beverley*, in "The Gamester." He also played in Philadelphia and Boston, prolonging his absence from New-York so long that the Chatham audiences fell off to such limited numbers that Mr. Ludlow assumed the responsibility of closing the establishment. Many esteemed names were included in this company—among others, James Scott, Mr. and Mrs. Blake, Mr. and Mrs. Flynn, Mrs. H. Wallack, Alexander Drake, John Sefton, etc.; and on the 16th of September, Miss Ann Waring, afterwards Mrs. J. Wallack, Jr., here made her first appearance on the stage, as *Amanthis*, in the "Child of Nature."

But little of interest followed during the next two seasons, his attractiveness declining with each successive engagement, until in August, 1830, he is found at the Bowery, New-York, under the management of

Messrs. Hackett and Hamblin, playing a fortnight's engagement with the able support of Mr. Hamblin, for which he received the sum of \$465.67.

Later in the season, at New Orleans, he revived, after many years' neglect, his personation of *Sir John Falstaff*, in "Henry IV.," with very great applause, and also represented *Cardinal Wolsey*, after a long intermission, probably with less success, as its repetition is not found announced in any succeeding programme. Indeed, Mr. Ludlow, in his "Dramatic Life," mentions that Mr. Cooper, in the scene between *Wolsey* and *Cromwell*, at the close of the third act, was so affected by the words and the situation that tears flowed from his eyes and coursed down his cheeks, so as to be visible to performers at the side scenes. It may be that the resemblance therein to his own declining condition caused it to be too painful for him to wish to repeat it.

He played in other Southern cities, including Charleston, and then went as far north as Albany, where he had a successful engagement, and on the 16th of June, 1831, re-appeared in New-York, at the Bowery, as *Mark Antony*, to Mr. Hamblin's *Brutus*, Mr. Booth's *Cassius*, and Mr. James Scott's *Julius Cæsar*.

On the 18th he represented *Falstaff* so successfully that it was repeated on the 20th, with Hamblin as *Hotspur*, and Booth as the *Prince of Wales*. On the 22d, Mrs. Duff was added to this remarkable combination, and played *Jane Shore*, to Cooper's *Hastings*, Booth's *Gloster*, and Hamblin's *Dumont*. For his benefit, Mr. Cooper chose "The School for Scandal," in which, for the first time, he attempted the character

of *Sir Peter Teazle*, and appeared in a portion of "Venice Preserved," in which he had the aid of Booth and Mrs. Duff.

For this engagement Mr. Cooper received \$250, and Mrs. Duff \$150, while Mr. Booth was under articles to Mr. Hamblin at \$100 per week, making his services for the same period worth about \$300.

The same powerful combination was transferred to Philadelphia on the 11th of July, where, as before, Mr. Cooper opened as *Mark Antony*, and Mr. Booth as *Cassius*, with Mr. Barton as *Brutus*; and Mrs. Duff was brought out on the 13th as *Jane Shore*, to Cooper's *Lord Hastings*. He here also played *Sir Peter Teazle*, and *Falstaff*, with marked approbation, although, owing to the extreme heat of the weather, he got through the latter part with great difficulty, and vowed that he never again would undertake it. In August of the same year, Mr. Cooper was again at the Bowery, New-York, with Mr. Booth, and the celebrated Mrs. Drake, from the Western theatres, and forgetting his vow at Philadelphia, for his benefit again went through with *Sir John Falstaff*, and for a performance of five nights received \$230 in full.

A certain indifference to any but newcomers, marked this period of dramatic history, and unless absolute novelty, either in play or performer was announced, the finest combination that America could procure sufficed but little in the way of attraction, even with the most approved productions found in dramatic literature.

In November, 1831, Mr. Cooper secured an engagement at the new Richmond Hill Theatre, New-York,

where he again played *Falstaff*, and *Penruddock*, and twice enacted the *Gamester*, with Mrs. Duff's support as *Mrs. Beverley*.

In November, 1832, on the occasion of the grand entertainment given at the Park Theatre, New-York, in honor of John Howard Payne, on his return from Europe, Mr. Cooper recited Dryden's celebrated ode "Alexander's Feast," which was received, as always, with the loudest applause.

January 29th, 1833, he played at the Park as *Iago*, to Mr. Forrest's *Othello*, for the benefit of Mr. Barry. He appeared at the time a noble compeer to Mr. Forrest, although some thirty years his senior. His costume was as elegant, his manner as easy, his action more graceful, his voice as clear and powerful, his bearing that of *Othello's* equal, not his subordinate. He looked a gay, young companion, whose first insinuations, with regard to *Cassio* and *Desdemona*, were given in a jesting mood, and intended rather to teasingly excite annoyance, than suspicion or jealousy. His manner deepened and darkened as his scheme developed itself, and a finer illustration of devilish subtlety was perhaps never exhibited by mortal powers.

So in the scene with *Cassio*, where he urges him to drink, he sang the verses, "King Stephen was a worthy peer," and "Let me the canakin clink," in so spirited, jovial, and friendly a manner, that the poor lieutenant could not discern the cruel object of his tempting solicitations, and the audience seemed delighted with his clever vocalization. In fact his whole performance of the character was a masterpiece of skill, and gave

not the slightest evidence of failing abilities. Yet the whole entertainment, which included, also, the then distinguished stars, Clara Fisher and Master Burke, with Placide, John Mason, Richings, J. H. Clarke, Mrs. Sharpe, and Mrs. Wheatley, in the admirable stock company, attracted an audience of only \$1160, an amount in other times frequently attained by the announcement of either of the above stars, singly and alone. Soon after this, Mr. Cooper is found in Philadelphia, where he first enacted the part of *Master Walter*, in "The Hunchback," which he repeated in New-York, at the Bowery, in June, with Hamblin as *Sir Thomas Clifford*, and the fascinating Miss Vincent as *Julia*.

## CHAPTER VII.

1833-1835.

Mr. Cooper's decline in popularity had now attracted the observation of his friends, who, knowing that the profuse liberality of his expenditures had nearly exhausted the accumulated profits of his earlier years, and being aware that his current professional earnings could not possibly meet the necessary demands for the support and education of his family in their accustomed style, projected a series of complimentary extra benefits in aid of what was called the "Cooper Fund," for the education of his children.

The first of these benefits came off at Philadelphia, on the 10th of June, 1833, when was performed the tragedy of "Venice Preserved," in which Mr. Charles Kemble and his daughter Fanny gave their valuable aid as *Jaffier* and *Belvidera*, and Mr. Cooper sustained his highly esteemed part of *Pierre*. Mrs. Maywood delivered a poetical address, and Mr. Rice gave his then immensely popular negro song of "Jim Crow." The afterpiece was "Black-eyed Susan," in which Mr. J. R. Scott appeared as *William* to Mrs. Rowbotham's *Susan* and Mrs. Thayer's *Dolly Mayflower*.

The season happened to be very warm; many families were out of town, and although the price of

tickets to boxes and pit was raised to \$2, the amount received — \$1600 — did not equal the anticipations of the committee who had the affair in charge. An addition of many hundred dollars contributed by those who did not attend the performance ultimately advanced the total to considerably above \$2500.

In the following November, at the Bowery, New-York, came off the second benefit with a success that had never before been equaled in America, and never surpassed, it was said, at the time, in Europe, the amount received being upwards of \$4500: admission to the boxes, \$2; pit, \$1; gallery, 50 cents; and the house crowded to its utmost capacity.

The following is an abstract of the bill:

November 7th, 1833.

#### THE HONEYMOON.

|                                                                     |                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Duke Aranza</i> .....                                            | MR. HAMBLIN.            |
| <i>Rolando</i> .....                                                | " H. WALLACK.           |
| <i>Count Montalban</i> .....                                        | " G. JONES.             |
| <i>Balthazar</i> .....                                              | " MCCLURE.              |
| <i>Jacques</i> .....                                                | " GATES.                |
| <i>Lampedo</i> .....                                                | " FARREN.               |
| <i>Lopez</i> .....                                                  | " SOWERBY.              |
| <i>Juliana</i> .....                                                | MISS JOSEPHINE CLIFTON. |
| <i>Volante</i> .....                                                | MRS. MCCLURE.           |
| <i>Zamora</i> .....                                                 | " FLYNN.                |
| <i>Hostess</i> .....                                                | " STEVENSON.            |
| <i>Song</i> —" <i>The Mermaid's Cave</i> ," by MISS JULIA WHEATLEY, |                         |
| With piano accompaniment by MR. HORN.                               |                         |
| <i>Grand Musical Olio</i> , by.....MR. and MRS. WOOD.               |                         |
| <i>Collins' Ode on the Passions</i> , recited by MRS. BARNES.       |                         |
| <i>Poetical Address</i> .....                                       |                         |
| .....MR. HAMBLIN.                                                   |                         |
| <i>Recitation</i> , " <i>Alexander's Feast</i> " ..                 |                         |
| " COOPER.                                                           |                         |

and THE IRISH TUTOR.

*Terry O'Rourke*.....MR. POWER.

*Charles* ..... " W. WHEATLEY.

*Mary*.....MRS. GALE.

The following elegant and appropriate address, written by Samuel Woodworth, was admirably delivered by Mr. Hamblin, and received with the most tumultuous applause:

" 'The King comes here to-night.' He who could wring  
Our hearts at will was 'every inch a king!'  
For when in life's bright noon the stage he trod  
In majesty and grace, a demi-god;  
With form, and mien, and attitude, and air,  
Which modern kings might envy in despair;  
When his stern brow and awe-inspiring eye  
Bore sign of an imperial majesty;  
Then—in the zenith of his glory—then  
He moved a model for the first of men!  
The drama was his empire: and his throne  
No rival dared dispute—he reigned alone!  
'His feet bestrode the ocean! his reared arm  
Crested the world!' His voice possessed a charm  
To love's, to friendship's, and to classic ears  
Like the sweet music of the tuneful spheres:  
'But when he meant to quail and shake the world'  
His accents were 'like rattling thunders' hurled!  
Or plead 'like angels, trumpet-tongued,' to prove  
The worth of freedom and the joys of love!

" Whether he gave ungentle wives rebuke,  
As simple Leon or Aranza's duke;  
Or tamed (as wild Petruchio) the shrew,  
Or showed a fiend in the unpying Jew;  
Displayed the wrecks of passion's withering storm  
In stern Penruddock's or the Stranger's form;

Whether he bade unnumbered victims bleed  
 'As Macedonia's madman or the Swede';  
 Moved as Iago or the generous Moor,  
 Or gallant Rolla 'mid the battle's roar  
 Stemming alone the tide of war and death;  
 Hamlet or Damon, Bertram or Macbeth;  
 Gloster, Young Wilding, Falstaff, Charles de Moor,  
 The graceful Doricourt, the gay Belcour;  
 Brutus — aye, both the Brutuses of Rome;  
 Mark Antony, lamenting Cæsar's doom;  
 The proud Coriolanus, or the sire  
 Of sweet Virginia; still his soul of fire  
 With grandeur blazed, to ravish or appall —  
 He 'was the noblest Roman of them all!'

"Whether he wore the reckless mien of Pierre,  
 Or the time-scathed decrepitude of Lear,  
 'Fourscore and upwards' — he might justly say,  
 'Didn't I, fellow! I have seen the day  
 When, with the very lightning of my brow,  
 I would have made them skip — I am old now,  
 And these same crosses spoil me':

Yes, 'tis true,  
 He once commanded where he now must sue,  
 For he's old now — and those unrivaled powers  
 For you exerted in his happiest hours,  
 Like flickering lights which in their sockets burn,  
 Are fast departing — never to return!

"But shall he now, when silvered o'er with age,  
 Who never made his exit from the stage  
 But 'mid the thunders of heartfelt applause,  
 Unhonored pass, when he at last withdraws?  
 He who devoted all his noonday powers  
 To strew your thorny path with classic flowers —  
 He, whom with laurels you have thickly decked —  
 Shall he at last be chilled with cold neglect?

Perish the thought ! 'Tis Cooper's right to claim,  
 Besides the glory of a deathless name,  
 Of your regard a more substantial proof  
 Than the loud cheers which shake this vaulted roof ;  
 Protection for his offspring ! dearer far  
 To his fond heart than earthly glories are ;  
 And you concede this claim — or else, to-night,  
 Here were not seen a galaxy so bright  
 Of beauty, taste, and fashion,—'tis a blaze  
 Which so reminds him of his better days  
 That fond regrets, with gratitude sincere  
 Are mingled in the language of a tear.  
 And as the worn war-horse at trumpet shrill  
 Leaps o'er each barrier that restrains his will,  
 So comes our monarch of a former age  
 Again to claim his empire o'er the stage,  
 From tyro potentates this truth to wring  
 He *was* and *is* 'in every inch a king' ;  
 With one bright flash renew th' expiring flame,  
 And gild the trophies round his honored name."

The last few lines were added by Mr. Farren, the stage manager, to introduce Mr. Cooper to the audience, whose superabundant shouts and cheers so overcame the veteran that, after bowing his acknowledgments, he was obliged to retire to wipe his moistened eyes and gain his usual voice before he entered on the difficult task of reciting Dryden's splendid ode, which was received as usual with the loudest demonstrations of delight.

A few days later, Mr. Cooper forwarded the following letter to the editors of New-York papers :

"GENTLEMEN: I have to request a small space in your columns, to afford me an opportunity of returning my

thanks to all who have kindly interested themselves on the occasion of the COOPER BENEFIT.

“My respected and valued old friends, who first called a meeting of their fellow-citizens friendly to the cause they wished to promote, will please to accept my heartfelt thanks—if they can add anything to the gratification I am sure they feel in the ample fulfillment of their most sanguine expectations.

“The liberal exertions of the general committee, so numerously constituted, demand my warmest acknowledgments; and I hope to be excused, if some regretful feelings throng across my mind, when I refer to *all* the causes and *all* the motives which conduced to gather together so large and respectable a body.

“My brother performers, generally, and old associates will excuse my not being particular in noticing the happy result of their combined endeavors to give *éclat* to the different parts allotted to them, consequent upon the offer of their services. I must, however, particularly mention Mr. Hamblin, whose personal services, and those of all whom he could influence, were proffered to me many months ago, when he expected they would be made use of in another and rival establishment, and consequently in some measure injuriously to his own individual interest.

“The generous feelings of Mr. and Mrs. Wood and Mr. Power will prompt them to believe how deeply I appreciate their kindness; and I should deem myself most ungrateful if I omitted to give my thanks to Mrs. Austin and Mr. Placide, who were both solicitous to serve me, but ‘might not.’ The wish in my estimation is equivalent to the deed. I must also in like manner refer to the kindness of Mr. Forrest, whose engagement elsewhere prevented his appearance at the Bowery Theatre on the 7th inst., but whose friendship toward me will be evinced,

should another occasion offer, where no invincible obstacle shall interfere.

"The gentlemen of the press have been very flatteringly kind upon the occasion, and I am much indebted to them for the zeal they thought merited by the cause they have so strenuously and beneficially advocated.

"I have deferred mentioning the committee of arrangements, Messrs. Ogden and McCoun, and Colonel Morris, that in their respect I may be most emphatic in the expression of my grateful thanks, conscious that their unremitting exertions have been most efficacious. The former of these gentlemen I have heard express the sentiment, and therefore they will excuse me for repeating it, that more than to any other individual my most grateful acknowledgments are due to the latter, Colonel Morris; and I must add, more particularly so, as Colonel Morris was an entire stranger to me and mine, and therefore acting from the single impulse of his own benevolent mind. I would say more but that the full expression of the warmth of my sentiments might be offensive to the delicacy of his feelings. To the liberal public of New-York, who so generously sustained the object of the committee, I conclude by the tender of my grateful and respectful acknowledgments.

"THOMAS A. COOPER.

"NEW-YORK, November 11, 1833."

It was generally supposed that this great benefit would terminate Mr. Cooper's professional career in New-York, and the public was somewhat surprised to find his name connected with Mr. Forrest's in an engagement at the Bowery, during the month of February, 1834, wherein he performed *Pierre, Damon*, and for the first time, *Cassius*, to Mr. Forrest's *Jaffier*,

*Pythias*, and *Mark Antony*. Taking his benefit on the 17th of the month, he personated *Virginius*, with Mr. Forrest's *Dentatus*, and first introduced to the public his beautiful and interesting daughter, Elizabeth Priscilla Cooper, in the character of *Virginia*.

With all the histrionic talent and ability displayed by this accomplished young lady, it is believed that compliance with her father's wishes and a desire to aid his exertions for his family's support, were the controlling inducements for her to enter the profession, in which she was most cordially received by hosts of friends. In the gentler line of tragic heroines she won well-merited applause, her name, more than her father's, being for a year or two the magnet that possessed the most attractive power. Miss Cooper continued on the stage until her betrothal to Mr. Robert Tyler, son of the afterwards President Tyler, to whom she was married on the 12th of September, 1839. During her father-in-law's residence at the White House, and until his marriage to Miss Gardiner, Mrs. Robert Tyler was for three years its presiding lady, and her graceful dignity and courteous urbanity won universal admiration. Through a long period of stormy political excitement, Mrs. Tyler's tact was thoroughly equal to the difficult task of giving an impartial welcome to friends and opponents of the President, and very general regret was expressed on her retirement from the position she had so prominently adorned.

Mr. Cooper soon after wended his way southward, and in the month of May was found at New Orleans, where another complimentary ovation was arranged

# AMERICAN THEATRE . . . . BOWERY.

## MR. COOPER'S

*Benefit and Last Appearance,*

On which occasion he begs to announce, to his Friends  
and the Public, that his Daughter,

## MISS P. E. COOPER,

Will make her First Appearance on any Stage, in  
the character of

## VIRGINIA.

Mr. Cooper as Virginius

And for this occasion only, the following gentlemen have  
kindly volunteered their services—

Mr. Forrest, as Dentatus,

Mr. Hamblin, as Icilius,

Mr. Wallack, as Mr. Somerton.

On Monday Evening, February 17th, 1834,

Will be acted, the Tragedy of

# Virginius

|                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Virginius,.....       | Mr. Cooper                |
| Dentatus,.....        | Mr. Forrest               |
| Icilius,.....         | Mr. Hamblin               |
| Appius Claudius,..... | Mr. Gale                  |
| Caius Claudius,.....  | Collins                   |
| Numitorius,.....      | McClure                   |
| Titus,.....           | Marble                    |
| Servius,.....         | Lewis                     |
| Virginia,.....        | by..... Miss P. E. Cooper |
| Servia,.....          | Mrs. Stevenson            |
|                       | Slave,.....               |

To conclude with the Farce of My

## Neighbour's Wife.

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Mr. Somerton,.....   | Mr. Wallack    |
| Timothy Brown,.....  | Mr. Flynn      |
| Jonathan Smith,..... | Gates          |
| Mrs. Smith,.....     | Mrs. Brown     |
|                      | Mrs. Herring   |
|                      | Mrs. Stevenson |



ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 19th, 1834,

Mr. Forrest's Benefit

A New and Splendid Melo-dramatic Spectacle, called

*The Maid of the Mist :*

*Or Ann of Gierstein.*

With new Scenery, Dresses, & Decorations has been some time  
in preparation, and will be produced in a few days.

J. W. BELL PRINTER, 17 ANN-STREET.



for him under the supervision of Mr. Forrest, who earnestly interested himself in securing its success.

A bill of the performance has not been obtained, but its main feature was the tragedy of "Virginus," in which the veteran sustained his original and greatly admired character of its hero; Mr. Forrest, *Dentatus*; and Miss Cooper, *Virginia*, being introduced to the audience by the following neat address, written by George E. Chase, and delivered by Mrs. George Barrett:

"As some bold mariner by storms long tossed  
His all, save hope, in trackless ocean lost —  
Steers his frail bark by vivid lightning's glare,  
With cheek unblanched, midst all the terrors there —  
Braving the billows manfully, describes  
The wished-for harbor and propitious skies —  
He comes to greet you, not the least, if last,  
And in your smiles find balm for sufferings past.  
Crowned with a laurel wreath, by friendship wrought,  
By you bestowed — as welcome as unbought,  
He comes, glad in the memory of hours  
Passed in your own bright land of sun and flowers.

"'Twas his, full often here in times gone by  
To strike the chord of generous sympathy;  
'Twas his to picture forth each noble part —  
The high, proud workings of the human heart,  
Ambition, jealousy, revenge, pride, hate,  
In humble cottage or in princely state.  
'Twas his with words of fire to move the throng,  
And rouse resistance to the tyrant's wrong —  
In virtue's cause to mail his manly breast,  
And stand forth friend and champion of the oppressed;  
Still most admired in honesty arrayed,  
For then 'twas all himself — 'twas COOPER played!

"To draw from virtuous eyes a priceless tear  
 For dying Brutus or forlorn old Lear —  
 To wake the terrors of Rome's proudest name,  
 To catch a gleam from noble Cato's flame —  
 To rule a wife — to tame a wayward shrew —  
 The melancholy Dane — the cruel Jew —  
 Aspiring Macbeth, red with bloody thought —  
 Iago's honeyed words with mischief fraught —  
 The kingly Damon, on the scaffold throne —  
 These in his day of power, were all his own.  
 So was the Roman father — and to you  
 To-night he gives his own loved daughter too.  
 Receive her kindly from the old man's hand,  
 And cherish into life this blossom of our land."

Mr. Cooper soon after presented his daughter to the publics of Baltimore, Pittsburg, and Philadelphia, in the character of *Virginia*; and also in the same character at Boston on the 28th of November, 1834, with the addition of *Katharine*, in "Katharine and Petruchio," in which he still represented the hero. In May, 1835, he was at the Walnut, in Philadelphia, where he played the *Hunchback*, with his daughter as *Julia*; and on his benefit night was honored, in the play of "Virginius," by the appearance of Mr. Sheridan Knowles in the character of *Ililius*. In September of the same year he was at the Bowery, New York, where his performances were admirably supported by Messrs. Hamblin, Finn, J. R. Scott, Ingersoll, and Miss Cooper, whose repertory now included *Mrs. Beverley*, *Miss Dorillon*, *Lady Teazle*, *Juliana*, *Hermione*, and *Desdemona*.

Mr. Cooper's personal decline was now very notice-

able. His *Duke Aranza*, once so bright and active, was languid, dull, and heavy, and he was unable to join in the dance that forms one of the most favorite features of the piece. He was received with very light applause.

In October, 1835, he was in Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, with his daughter, who now added *Juliet* and *Estifania* to her list of parts. From there he addressed the following letter to F. C. Wemyss, at Pittsburg, dated October 23, 1835:

“MY DEAR SIR: The last time I was at Pittsburg was election time. Could I be of any service now these troubles are over? My list alone, you know. With my daughter, it is extended several parts—School for Scandal, Damon and Pythias, Rule a Wife, Romeo and Juliet, Othello, Hunchback, Wives and Maids. A line in two or three days will oblige, yours respectfully,

“THOMAS A. COOPER.

“BRISTOL, near PHILADELPHIA.”

How different from the time when his services were constantly solicited for every prominent theatre in the country, and when the announcement of his name was the sure premonition of a crowded house. He had now sadly become the seeker instead of the sought-after.

On the 24th of November, 1835, for Mr. Hamblins' benefit at the Bowery Theatre, Mr. Cooper made his last appearance on the New-York stage in the character of *Mark Antony*, with Mr. Hamblin as *Brutus* and Mr. Booth as *Cassius*. Thirty-eight years had

elapsed since his first gallant entrance in that city in the little summer theatre in Greenwich Street, in the pride of youth and full flush of manly beauty, and with the enthusiastic applauses of the entire audience—the prelude to a full quarter of a century's unrivaled position in the estimation of the public.

# AMERICAN THEATRE

## BOWERY.

 **Grand Extra Night.** 

FOR THE BENEFIT OF  
**Mr. Hamblin.**

MESSRS.  
**Booth & Cooper**  
FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY!

## JULIUS CAESAR

WITH THE FOLLOWING POWERFUL CAST.

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>BRUTUS,</b>      | <b>Mr. HAMBLIN.</b> |
| <b>CASSIUS,</b>     | <b>Mr. BOOTH.</b>   |
| <b>MARC ANTONY,</b> | <b>Mr. COOPER.</b>  |

On Tuesday Evening, Nov. 24th, 1835,

Will be presented Shakspeare's Tragedy of

## JULIUS CAESAR

|                                 |                 |                    |          |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------|
| Brutus, .....                   | Mr. Hamblin     |                    |          |
| Julius Caesar, .. Mr. Pickering | Cinna, .....    | Hayden             |          |
| Casca, .....                    | Flynn           | Soothsayer, .....  | Herbert  |
| Decius, .....                   | Lewis           | Popilius, .....    | Addis    |
| Marc Antony, .....              | Mr. Cooper      |                    |          |
| Octavius Caesar, .. Woodhull    | Pindarus, ..... | Lewis              |          |
| Metellus, .....                 | Lyne            | Trebonius, .....   | Jackson  |
| Flavius, .....                  | Beckwell        | Titinius, .....    | Addis    |
| Cassius, .....                  | Mr. Booth       |                    |          |
| Lucius, .....                   | Miss Bell       | 3d Citizen, .....  | Herbert  |
| 1st Citizen, .....              | Gates           | 4th Citizen, ..... | Burns    |
| 2d Citizen, .....               | Baldock         | Servius, .....     | Beckwell |
| Portia, .....                   | Mrs. Flynn      |                    |          |
| Calphurnia, .....               | Mrs. Herring    |                    |          |

To conclude with the laughable Farce of

## KILL OR CURE

|                      |           |                   |              |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Mr. Brown, .....     | Mr. Flynn | Apothecary, ..... | Mr. Addis    |
| Mr. Marmaduke, ..... | Foot      | Betty, .....      | Mrs. Herring |
| John, .....          | Baldock   | Mrs. Brown, ..... | Herbert      |



**Doors will open at Quarter past Six o'clock.**  
**The Curtain will rise at Seven precisely.**

Jared W. Bell, Printer, Franklin Hall, 17 Ann-street.



CHAPTER VIII.

1836-1849.

In 1836 Mr. Cooper was again at New Orleans, where his performances were still highly acceptable, and where his *Macbeth* especially was pronounced equal to that of his brightest days.

Another of his letters may be quoted here, addressed to Mr. Wemyss, and dated Bristol, September 1, 1836 :

"MY DEAR SIR: As I all along believed, notwithstanding your conviction to the contrary, I see that Forrest plays at Chestnut Street on Monday next. I have been rather disappointed in not hearing from you yesterday. Relative to F., it appears, as Michael Ducas says, 'When offers fail, virtue's not *strong*, but *dear*, and that bright honour that will spurn a dukedom (\$4000), a kingdom shown (double the amount in proportion), will blush and take the bribe.'

"Doctors differ; when I landed in Boston in 1828 the Federal Street Theatre offered me \$2000 for six nights. I considered myself bound to accept it. The Tremont offered me *carte blanche*, and they had first applied to me.

"Mr. Fuller, concerned in the house of Key and Biddle in Union Street, then a manager in the Tremont, was cognizant of the matter—do you know him? He is one of your supporters. How do you go on?

"Yours, etc., THOS. A. COOPER.

"When does the Pittsburg Theatre open?"

The foregoing probably referred to a reported determination of Mr. Forrest never again to play at the Chestnut Street Theatre while Mr. Maywood was manager, a resolution that had been overcome by the offer of sufficiently liberal terms; and his appearance there may also have had a discouraging effect on Mr. Cooper's prospect of obtaining an engagement in Philadelphia at that time. The letter is also valuable in showing what Mr. Cooper's services were worth in 1828.

Southern engagements were probably secured during 1837-38, and in September of the latter year is found a record of one at Boston for ten nights, with his daughter's assistance, the average receipt being \$136 per night, and the highest, to his *Master Walter* and Miss Cooper's *Julia*, reaching only \$224.88. In October Mr. Cooper played in Albany, which is generally believed to have been the last engagement he ever fulfilled, and which, like the one in Boston, proved very unattractive.

Possibly some others may have been effected at the extreme South, but time had now deprived Mr. Cooper of all important requisites for a high professional position, and newer favorites entirely absorbed the attention of the public. As in his earlier years, he must still be a leader or nothing, and the humiliation of a secondary situation in an ordinary stock company was not to be thought of.

By his second marriage he had become the father of nine children, six daughters and three sons, two of whom died in their infancy. His son, James Fairlie

Cooper, born in New-York, graduated at West Point, July 1st, 1834, and was commissioned Second Lieutenant of the Third Infantry, serving until August, 1837, when he resigned to engage in civil engineering on railroads at the South.

In 1843, President Tyler appointed him Superintendent of the United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia, where he served for six years, and he was afterwards Superintendent or Chief Engineer of different Southern railroads. He bore an exalted reputation in Georgia, where he was looked upon as a most estimable and high-minded gentleman. His death occurred in 1869, at Atlanta, Georgia, where a wife and several children mourned his loss.

Mr. Cooper's daughters all grew to womanhood and five of them married. Returning from a visit to one of them who resided in Alabama, in 1848, he stopped on his return at Charleston, S. C., to enjoy the society of old friends there, of which circumstance Dr. J. B. Irving has written as follows :

“ He seemed to linger with peculiar interest among his early friends, putting off his departure from day to day, with feelings so unusually softened as to be remarked by everybody that knew him in his sterner days—it was a striking but sweetly pleasing contrast to that rather hard nature and to that dictatorial tone, attributed to him by many, at one period of his life. I had not been an indifferent observer of his chastened feelings. Contemplating him like Belisarius, standing up manfully, a noble ruin, amid the wreck and crash of his fallen fortunes, out of sincere sympathy for my old friend, and from a hint he

gave me that it would be agreeable, I remained as much with him as other demands upon my time would permit, accompanying him at last to the ship to see him off.

“On taking his final leave of me on board, with a presentiment, doubtless, that we should never meet again, he said, with manifest emotion, ‘Remember, if I see you no more, my last words to you were of gratitude and affection to my Charleston friends; say for me to one and all, God bless them!’

“By the lack of that prudence, which is so seldom the lot of those who formerly belonged to the theatrical profession, Mr. Cooper had put up little with which to cheer his old age and smooth his passage to the grave. But he *was still rich*—rich in the love and devotion of good children. These were resources from which he never drew in vain. In the quiet of domestic life, he divided his latter days among the different members of his own family—

“‘Till failing nature, more and more opprest,  
Consigned at last his wearied limbs to rest.’”

On Mr. Tyler's accession to the Presidency, Mr. Cooper was nominated by him as Surveyor of the Port of Philadelphia, but the Senate's confirmation was not secured; and during President Polk's administration he was appointed an inspector in the New-York Custom House, where his faithful and efficient services were highly appreciated.

A portly old gentleman with rubicund face and silvery hair, clothed in summer in an entire suit of white, with an eyeglass hanging jauntily from his neck and a certain indescribable air of high-breeding about him, was often observed in the neighborhood of Wall Street

by many who little imagined that in his person was once concentrated all the matchless elegance of the tragedian Cooper. While occupying this position in New-York, he was usually a weekly visitor at Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tyler's residence, at Bristol, Pa., his own former home there having been given up after his wife's death and daughter's marriage.

Here, early in 1849, he was seized with a severe illness, which he bore with the greatest patience and fortitude ; his sufferings, prolonged for four months, being somewhat ameliorated by the constant attention of his devoted daughters, Mrs. Tyler and Mrs. Allan Campbell, in whose arms he may be said to have expired on the 21st of April, 1849, in the seventy-third year of his age. His remains lie in the old church-yard at Bristol, by the side of his wife, and in close contiguity to several grandchildren.

Thus passed from existence, in his old age, an actor who, for a greater number of consecutive years, and in a wider range of diversified parts than any contemporary, had held the fullest admiration of the American public. As the first prominent exemplar of the Kemble school, of which he was not a servile copyist, he introduced a style of reading and elegance of action dissimilar from that of Garrick's day which at once obtained the approval of his auditors, and an admiration which even the subsequent appearance of Cooke, Kean, and Booth could not shake. It was said that they, as well as Forrest, excelled him in individual parts, but neither of them ever attempted numerous ones, in which Cooper in his prime was pronounced

unrivaled. Cooke never performed *Romeo*, nor Kean *Mercutio*, nor Booth *Damon*, nor Forrest *Charles Surface*, which were among Cooper's most admired performances.

No succeeding star has shone with such unclouded brilliancy, in such a varying and wide-spreading circuit, and neither of the above-mentioned artists passed through their careers as free from critical censure and personal dislike. Well would it be for the profession if all its votaries were as faithful in discharge of their duty to the public, as pure in character, as sincere in friendship, as generous, noble, and kind-hearted, and as honorable and high-minded in all the relations of life as was Thomas Abthorpe Cooper.

CHAPTER IX.

Addenda.

A few remarks and critical notices of Mr. Cooper by his contemporaries are herewith appended :

Mr. Cooper continued to play in Greenwich Street, and occasionally had an opportunity of bursting forth with a force and fire, guided by genius and taste, that won the audience of New-York, and made him a decided favorite before the theatre closed. His *Hastings* in "Jane Shore" made a great impression — on some, more than his *Pierre* had done. — WILLIAM DUNLAP, 1797.

Among the performers, Mr. Cooper is preëminent. As a tragedian he is without a rival in our country. Whoever has read Shakespeare's plays with pleasure, will hear them pronounced by Mr. Cooper with delight. Passion lives in the language of his look, and all his accents speak the voice of nature. With equal ease he swells in all the rage of angry pride to act the tyrant, or sinks in melting strains to win a woman's heart.—J. T. BUCKINGHAM, in "The Boston Polyanthos," 1805.

Criticism has almost exhausted her stores on this eminent tragedian, applause has encircled him with her incense, and beauty with her smiles. When he enters, the house echoes; when he speaks, it is hushed; and when he weeps, it is in tears. "Attention mute" is surely the highest tribute which can be paid to the powers of an actor, and it seldom has been denied to Mr. Cooper.—JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, in "The Thespian Mirror," 1806.

In the natural gifts and requisites of an actor, Mr. Cooper has never had a competitor on the American stage. . . . We feel a reluctance to speak of Mr. Cooper's *Pierre* in contrast to Mr. Fennell's *Jaffier*, from this very sufficient reason, that in the disposition of the parts nature has pronounced her inhibition against the one and has given her amplest commission to the other. Every actor has peculiar habitudes of gesticulation, speech, and expression; in all these Cooper is molded and fashioned into *Pierre*; and beyond these, which are great and striking endowments, he is eminently happy in transfusing the soul of his author into the character of his action. We do not believe that this bold, ingenuous, generous, affectionate rebel was ever personated with more propriety, fire, or discrimination on the London boards.—ROBERT TREAT PAINE, 1808.

#### LINES

On the establishment of the New Theatre, and the management being placed in the hands of Mr. Cooper.

“Quid Sophocles et Thespis, et Æschylus utile ferrent.  
Tentavit quoque rem si digne vertere posset-non.”

This noble pile, superbly great,  
In Athens might have graced her state,  
And rivals all that London claims  
From brilliant scenes and boasted names.

Whate'er the tragic muse affords  
Will here be told in glowing words:  
From magic scenes to charm the eyes  
All Nature's pictures will arise.

And she who charms the sprightly throng,  
The goddess of the comic song,  
The muse of laughter and of jest  
Will bring amusement with the rest.

And COOPER here, who leads the train  
Of sorrow, pleasure, pity, pain,  
A Roscius of superior powers,  
The modern Garrick, now is ours.

He will display on Nature's stage  
(Or Nature copied from her page)  
The force of all that Shakespeare writ,  
All Otway's grief and Congreve's wit.

With him, a chosen band agree  
To make the stage what it should be,  
The serious moral to impart,  
To cheer the mind and mend the heart.

The manners of the age t' improve,  
To enforce the power of virtuous love,  
Chaste morals in the soul t' implant  
Which most admire and many want.

On such a plan, theatric shows  
Do honor to the Thespian muse,  
Impart a polish to the mind,  
Instruct and civilize mankind.

Ye sages who in morals deal,  
But all the pleasing side conceal,  
From hence confess that morals may  
As surely take the brilliant way.

With such an object in our view,  
Let Thespis all his arts pursue,  
When autumn brings the lengthening nights  
And reason to her feast invites.

PHILIP FRENEAU.

New-York, 1806.

Many of Mr. Cooper's admirers set down his *Hamlet* as the best of his performances. . . . But in our opinion his *Hamlet* fades from the sight when put in competition with his *Macbeth*, in which he unquestionably takes the lead of all the actors that have appeared in this country, and is in our judgment preferable in many parts to either Kemble or Cooke, far, very far superior to Holman. His dagger-scene is inimitably fine.—CARPENTER'S "Mirror of Taste," 1810.

At Liverpool and Manchester, he (Cooper) played several nights alternately with Kemble, Cooke, Young, and the other eminents of the time. During his engagement at Liverpool, the character of *Richard III.* was enacted within a few days by Kemble, Cooke, and Cooper. The accomplished Mr. Roscoe, of Liverpool, occasionally favored the public and the players with critical remarks on the most deserving performances, among which, probably, the efforts of the three tragedians afforded him the best opportunity of showing his judgment as well as liberality. In reviewing each actor carefully, he awarded fairly to each his superiority in several scenes. Kemble, he conceived was inaccessible in dignity, duplicity, and finish. Cooke, he lauded for rough spirit and untiring energy. To Cooper he gave the palm for his exhibition of despair and guilty ravings. The whole of his fifth act Roscoe pronounced superior to his rivals, but concluded by saying, "Mr. Cooper, the young *Richard*, gave some admirable acting in several scenes besides; and we hope he will be satisfied if, for the present, we feel compelled to rank him *Richard the Third*." Cooper often declared that he considered this criticism the highest compliment he had ever received.—W. B. WOOD'S "Recollections of the Stage."

Endowed with great genius and the highest qualifications in face, voice, and person, he had little or no art, which he never strove to acquire, being content to cover its want by his impulse and freshness. Thus, as he grew older, he failed to improve, while his luxurious habits abated his force, and left but gleams of the fire which at first was continuous. . . . Still, with all his de-

fects, I look back to his youth as displaying a power which I can only rank second to the greatest I have seen. I still think his *Macbeth* was only inferior to Garrick's and his *Hamlet* to Kemble's, while his *Othello* I think was equal to Barry's itself.—JOHN BERNARD'S "Retrospections of America."

Any one who saw him from year to year, and watched him with a critic's eye, must have perceived a gradual improvement. His style of acting in 1825 was indeed very different from what it was in 1805, but it was all for the better. There was more of natural tenderness in his *Hamlet*, more of dignity in his *Coriolanus*, more of passion in his *Othello*, more of the terribly sublime in his *Macbeth*. There was more of philosophical deliberation in all his parts, and he seldom introduced a change from his former manner, seldom deviated from the beaten track which antiquity and fashion had consecrated—that had not something plausible, if not convincing to offer in its vindication.

Though always elegant, impressive, and graceful in declamation, his style of speaking was much improved as his faculties approached maturity. His *Mark Antony* was a model of popular eloquence, and his *Brutus* in the same tragedy displayed the calm, unimpassioned, yet persuasive eloquence of the philosopher. In the early part of his theatrical career, he considered *Hamlet* the most finished of all his personations, and the public voice seemed to coincide with him in this decision. But when his faculties were in their unfaded maturity, *Macbeth* was certainly his masterpiece.—J. T. BUCKINGHAM, in "The Boston Book," 1850.

Mr. Cooper's best characters, as far as my judgment allowed me to form an opinion, were *Iago* and *Damon*. His *Virginus*, also, at certain times, when he was "in the vein," in some respects was very effective. His *Iago* I always thought a very finished piece of acting, denoting more study and attention to business than was his wont to manifest. It was exquisitely finished, in the stern and unbending in purpose, the insidious and pliant in manner, the complete, smooth, varnished villain. . . . He

presented the character in analysis, not only of its *parts* but of its *spirit*. Many of his readings struck me as so beautiful and illustrative, that although I had seen *Iago* enacted with great felicity on many occasions, the *extent* of the significations of some of the passages never before presented themselves to me. . . .

Of his *Damon* I can speak in the same unqualified terms of praise. In some scenes I have known him elevate himself, and stand up on the highest pinnacle of his art. From its commanding, heroic, and passionate features he achieved some wonderful triumphs in it. His exhausted and tottering entrance before the scaffold, in the last scene, and the start and cry of delight at hearing *Pythias's* voice, were the triumphs of experience, judgment, and power.

I shall never forget the performance of this part one night at the Park Theatre, New-York. Conway,—poor Conway had just arrived from England, and went with me to see Cooper for the first time, and we sat together on the same bench. In the scene in which *Damon* parts with his wife and child, poor Conway was deeply moved—he wept; all his visage wanned. Putting one of his hands in mine, and with his other wiping off the trickling drops, he whispered, “Ah, that is indeed a fine piece of acting. Never have I witnessed that scene so well acted before.”—DR. J. B. IRVING, of Charleston, S. C.

The play (“*Damon and Pythias*”) in itself is a great one, but when such an actor as Cooper steps into the very figure of *Damon*, with all his patriotism, with all his friendship and all his love, we cannot withhold our tribute of admiration. There is something so elevated in the acting of this gentleman—so perfectly according with the lofty spirit of a great soul, that has raised him to the highest rank he can attain. He seems to have been created to personify the noble characters of times gone by. His figure, his face, his very voice breathes forth the high-toned grandeur of Roman greatness. In portraying the overwhelming passions of a noble soul, I believe he stands unrivaled. He is surpassed by Kean in *Lear* and *Othello*, but in *Virginus*, *Brutus*, and *Damon*, I question whether he is not superior to any other in the world. His

form and voice give him infinite advantage over his distinguished rival. Kean is eminently successful in the tenderness of *Jaffier*, the hopeless agony of the aged *Lear*, the subtle, penetrating villainy of *Richard III.*, and the jealous and distracting love of the noble *Moor*. In all these, and many others, the powerful genius of Kean bears down all opposition. But when he would rival Cooper in the proud, unbending character of ancient times—in those god-like spirits, who rose out of the desolation of war—who brooded over the broken ruins of their country's greatness, or triumphed over the vestiges of their own blasted hopes—whose mighty souls bore up amidst ruin and sorrow, and "walked abroad in their own majesty" above the frailties of human nature, it is here we find Mr. Kean is surpassed. He wants the elevated and conscious dignity of Cooper, the power to draw up a noble figure to its full height, and look down upon the inferiority of all around—to display might in every limb, greatness and majesty in every motion, and show us in appearance as well as action the great character he personifies. This is the superior power of Cooper, and all this power is brought forward in the play of "Damon and Pythias."—THEODORE S. FAY, in the "New-York Mirror," 1823.

But the crowning acts of Mr. Cooper's performances were *Virginus* and *Damon*, both of them new in the city of New Orleans. . . . The character of *Virginus* was originally performed by Mr. W. C. Macready; the character of *Virginia* by Miss Maria Foote. But the whole success of the play depends mainly on the character of *Virginus* being efficiently acted; and that was the secret of its greater success in America, where the principal character found its ablest representatives in Mr. Cooper and Mr. Forrest. I saw Mr. Macready perform *Virginus* in one of his tours through the United States, . . . but I did not like it; it was too cold and lifeless; it lacked the tender, loving, fatherly beauty of Cooper in scenes with the daughter, and fell far short of the soldierly bearing of the Roman centurion as performed by Mr. Forrest. Mr. Cooper's style of acting was founded on the John Kemble school, a little modified, perhaps;

rather more impulsive in passionate scenes, but possessing all the towering grandeur of that great English actor. It was as unlike that of Mr. J. B. Booth or Mr. Edmund Kean as a *monsoon* is to a whirlwind. . . . You beheld the silent and gradual approaches of the storms of passion, and you stood transfixed with the grandeur of the scene.—N. M. LUDLOW'S "Dramatic Life."

Mr. Cooper as *Glenalvon* (in "Douglas") stalked before us in all the by-gone glory of ten years since, when his misconceptions were esteemed originality, or forgotten in the elegance of his demeanor and the richness of his mellow-toned voice. Who, that the gods had made theatrical at that almost forgotten period, will not remember the peculiar high tone of his *Virginus*? "I said I would be patient, and I am,"—with the indrawn breath and the characteristic flourish of the arm. It is not fair to judge him now with a "critic's eye." We look upon him as the property of former times. An old fallen oak, putting out a few green branches,—a broken column supporting some roof erected over its carved beauties to supply the purposes of strangers to those by whom it was sculptured and admired. We are glad ever to have an opportunity to welcome a gleam of ancient light across the paths of this once idolized veteran; and when his faults become too conspicuous to be hidden beneath the cloak of charitable recollections, we shake our head like ancient Ossian over "the joys that are departed," and think "Old *Cassius* still."—"New-York Mirror," 1831.

CHAPTER X.

An estimate of the wonderful versatility and ability of Mr. Cooper as an actor can be formed by a glance at the following list of characters performed by him during his theatrical career. So extensive a range, and so great a number of leading parts, was perhaps never successfully attempted by any other actor. His were not the days of "runs for five hundred consecutive performances"; and the amount of hard work and diligent application it necessarily required for an actor to perfect himself in the "study" and "business" of so many important parts must have been very great indeed. And when we take into consideration the period in which he was most actively engaged in his profession, the extent of his circuit, the limited means of transit in this country (he generally traveling in his own private coach), and the time necessarily expended in getting from place to place, the amount of work accomplished by him was enormous.

CHARACTERS PERFORMED BY MR. COOPER.

|                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Abaellino . . . . .           | Abaellino.           |
| Alasco . . . . .              | Alasco.              |
| Albert . . . . .              | Werter.              |
| Alberto . . . . .             | Child of Nature.     |
| Alexander the Great . . . . . | Alexander the Great. |
| Alzuma . . . . .              | Alzuma.              |

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|                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Amurath .....             | Bellamira.                   |
| Antonio .....             | Merchant of Venice.          |
| Baron Willinghurst .....  | The Wild Goose Chase.        |
| Bajazet .....             | Tamerlane.                   |
| Beauchamp .....           | Which is the Man.            |
| Belcour .....             | The West Indian.             |
| Bellamy .....             | The School for Soldiers.     |
| Belmour .....             | The Prodigal.                |
| Benedick .....            | Much Ado About Nothing.      |
| Bertram .....             | Bertram.                     |
| Beverley .....            | The Gamester.                |
| Beraldo .....             | The Italian Father.          |
| Biron .....               | Isabella.                    |
| Bland .....               | André.                       |
| Brutus .....              | Julius Cæsar.                |
| Bulchazin Mulcy .....     | Mountaineers.                |
| Cardinal Wolsey .....     | King Henry VIII.             |
| Count Benyowski .....     | Benyowski.                   |
| Count Villars .....       | The School for Arrogance.    |
| Col. Cohenberg .....      | The Siege of Belgrade.       |
| Col. Tamper .....         | The Deuce is in Him.         |
| Capt. Douglas .....       | Follies of Fashion.          |
| Capt. Faulkner .....      | The Way to Get Married.      |
| Capt. Irwin .....         | Every One Has His Fault.     |
| Capt. Manly .....         | The Plain Dealer.            |
| Caius Gracchus .....      | Caius Gracchus.              |
| Caleb Quotem .....        | The Review.                  |
| Carlos .....              | The Revenge.                 |
| Carlos .....              | Love Makes a Man.            |
| Carlos .....              | The Mysteries of the Castle. |
| Cassimir .....            | The Minister.                |
| Cassius .....             | Julius Cæsar.                |
| Chamont .....             | The Orphan.                  |
| Charles Austencourt ..... | Man and Wife.                |
| Charles de Moor .....     | The Robbers.                 |
| Charles Surface .....     | The School for Scandal.      |
| Cheviot .....             | The World.                   |

|                        |                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Colonna .....          | Evadne.                     |
| Columbus .....         | Columbus.                   |
| Coriolanus .....       | Coriolanus.                 |
| Cromwell .....         | King Henry VIII.            |
| Duke Aranza .....      | The Honeymoon.              |
| Don Carlos .....       | Don Carlos.                 |
| Don Felix .....        | The Wonder.                 |
| Don Juan .....         | Don Juan.                   |
| Don Ordonio .....      | Remorse.                    |
| Dr. Infallible .....   | Folly as it Flies.          |
| Damon .....            | Damon and Pythias.          |
| D'Arlemont .....       | Deaf and Dumb.              |
| De Montfort .....      | De Montfort.                |
| Dolabella .....        | All for Love.               |
| Doricourt .....        | The Belle's Stratagem.      |
| Drooply .....          | The Votary of Wealth.       |
| Durazzo .....          | Durazzo.                    |
| Durimel .....          | The Point of Honor.         |
| Dyonisius .....        | The Grecian Daughter.       |
| Earl Douglas .....     | Percy.                      |
| Earl Osmond .....      | The Castle Spectre.         |
| Earl of Richmond ..... | King Richard III.           |
| Ensign Erlén .....     | Modern Magic.               |
| Edward Smith .....     | The Force of Calumny.       |
| Edwy .....             | Edwy and Elgiva.            |
| Egerton .....          | Secrets Worth Knowing.      |
| The Æthiop .....       | The Æthiop.                 |
| Falconbridge .....     | King John.                  |
| Falkland .....         | The Rivals.                 |
| Fiesco .....           | Fiesco.                     |
| Fitzharding .....      | The Curfew.                 |
| Ford .....             | The Merry Wives of Windsor. |
| Frank Heartall .....   | The Soldier's Daughter.     |
| Frederick .....        | Lovers' Vows.               |
| Frederick .....        | The Poor Gentleman.         |
| The Ghost .....        | Hamlet.                     |
| Glenalvon .....        | Douglas.                    |

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|                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Guiscard.....             | Adelgitha.                   |
| Gustavus Vasa.....        | Gustavus Vasa.               |
| Hamlet.....               | Hamlet.                      |
| Harry Dornton.....        | The Road to Ruin.            |
| Harry Herbert.....        | Columbus.                    |
| Henry.....                | The Count of Burgundy.       |
| Horatio.....              | The Fair Penitent.           |
| Hotspur.....              | King Henry IV.               |
| Howard.....               | The Will.                    |
| Iago.....                 | Othello.                     |
| Jacques.....              | As You Like It.              |
| Jaffier.....              | Venice Preserved.            |
| John of Mirandola.....    | Mirandola.                   |
| King Henry V.....         | King Henry V.                |
| King Henry VI.....        | King Richard III.            |
| King John.....            | King John.                   |
| King Lear.....            | King Lear.                   |
| King Richard III.....     | King Richard III.            |
| Lord Hastings.....        | Jane Shore.                  |
| Lord Townly.....          | The Provoked Husband.        |
| Leon.....                 | Rule a Wife and Have a Wife. |
| Lothario.....             | The Fair Penitent.           |
| Lucius Junius Brutus..... | Brutus.                      |
| Luke.....                 | Riches.                      |
| Master Walter.....        | The Hunchback.               |
| Mr. Oakley.....           | The Jealous Wife.            |
| Macbeth.....              | Macbeth.                     |
| Macduff.....              | Macbeth.                     |
| Malec.....                | The Apostate.                |
| The Manager.....          | The Manager in Distress.     |
| Mark Antony.....          | Julius Cæsar.                |
| Mark Antony.....          | All for Love.                |
| Marmion.....              | Marmion.                     |
| Mercutio.....             | Romeo and Juliet.            |
| Michael.....              | The Adopted Child.           |
| Michael Ducas.....        | Adelgitha.                   |
| Mordent.....              | The Deserted Daughter.       |

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Old Dornton .....          | The Road to Ruin.         |
| Octavian .....             | The Mountaineers.         |
| Orlando .....              | The Robbery.              |
| Orsino .....               | Alfonso.                  |
| Othello .....              | Othello.                  |
| Prince of Wales .....      | King Henry IV.            |
| Penruddock .....           | The Wheel of Fortune.     |
| Peter the Great .....      | Peter the Great.          |
| Petruchio .....            | Katharine and Petruchio.  |
| Philotas .....             | The Grecian Daughter.     |
| Phocian .....              | The Grecian Daughter.     |
| Pierre ... ..              | Venice Preserved.         |
| Polydore .....             | The Law of Lombardy.      |
| Publius .....              | The Roman Father.         |
| Pythias .....              | Damon and Pythias.        |
| Reuben Glenroy .....       | Town and Country.         |
| Ribbemont .....            | The Siege of Calais.      |
| Rolla .....                | Pizarro.                  |
| Rolla .....                | The Virgin of the Sun.    |
| Romeo .....                | Romeo and Juliet.         |
| Sir Edward Mortimer .....  | The Iron Chest.           |
| Sir George Versatile ..... | He's Much to Blame.       |
| Sir Harry Sutherland ..... | Management.               |
| Sir John Falstaff .....    | King Henry IV.            |
| Sir Oswin Mortland .....   | To Marry or Not to Marry. |
| Sir Peter Teazle .....     | The School for Scandal.   |
| Sir Philip Blandford ..... | Speed the Plough.         |
| Sir William Dorillon ..... | Wives as They Were.       |
| Squire Groom .....         | Love à la Mode.           |
| Selim .....                | The Bride of Abydos.      |
| Shylock .....              | The Merchant of Venice.   |
| The Stranger .....         | The Stranger.             |
| Strickland .....           | The Suspicious Husband.   |
| Sydenham .....             | The Wheel of Fortune.     |
| Tekeli .....               | Tekeli.                   |
| Ulric .....                | Adelmorn the Outlaw.      |
| Virginius .....            | Virginius.                |

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|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Vivaldi .....       | The Italian Monk.         |
| Wacker .....        | The Corsicans.            |
| Walter .....        | The Children in the Wood. |
| Wieland .....       | False Shame.              |
| William Tell .....  | William Tell.             |
| Yorick .....        | Sterne's Maria.           |
| Young Norval .....  | Douglas.                  |
| Young Wilding ..... | The Liar.                 |
| Zanga .....         | The Revenge.              |
| Zorinski .....      | Zorinski.                 |

Among a large collection of old-time play-bills and newspaper advertisements, Mr. Cooper is found announced for *Macbeth* 84 times; for *Othello*, 71 times; *Hamlet*, 73 times; *Leon* ("Rule a Wife"), 68 times; *Damon*, 57 times; *Beverly* ("The Gamester"), 56 times, and *Virginus*, 55 times.

*Pierre*, *Duke Aranza*, *Richard III.*, *Rolla*, *Petruchio*, *Mark Antony*, *Alexander the Great*, *Romeo*, *Hotspur*, *Iago*, *Penruddock*, *Coriolanus*, and *Octavian*, are also frequently represented. Of course, very many engagements and performances are not included in the above collection.

It is recorded of Mr. Cooper that, previous to the year 1830, he had visited every State then in the Union, played in 64 theatres, acted 4500 nights, and traveled 20,000 miles, mostly in his own conveyance — no railroads being then in operation.

## NOTES.

Note to p. 8. Contributed by T. J. McKee, Esq.

It was at about this period (1795) that that precocious literary forger and impostor, young William Henry Ireland, was making known his pretended discoveries of plays, relics, etc., of Shakespeare, and thereby creating an intense interest and excitement in dramatic and literary circles and bringing about a general revival of Shakespearean study and investigation.

Cooper seems to have been infected with the popular fever. One of the so-called doubtful plays of Shakespeare, "*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*," was adapted for him for representation at Covent Garden Theatre. Cooper seems to have made a study of the play, and to have intended to perform the part of *Pericles*, but for some unknown reason the play was not brought forth.

A beautiful engraving of him (then in his twentieth year), in the character of *Pericles*, was made and appears as a frontispiece to the adaptation of the play as published in July, 1796. Several other portraits of Mr. Cooper have been published — one small one in the "*Boston Polyanthos*," 1806; one fine folio painted by Wood and engraved by Meyer, 1806; a fine head as *Hamlet*, in the "*Mirror of Taste*," 1810; one in the character of *Leon*, painted by Leslie, in the same, 1811; and one as *Pierre*, also by Leslie, which, if not intended as a caricature, is at least a gross exaggeration.

Note to page 34. Contributed by T. J. McKee, Esq.

The comedian, Munden, contributed in a measure if he did not give rise to this charge against Cooper. Munden had been playing at the Liverpool theatre where Cooke was also engaged, and Harris, the manager of Covent Garden, with whom Cooke had made an engagement for the next season and to whom it was said

that he was deeply indebted, learning in some way of the negotiations with Cooper, and having some misgivings as to Cooke's proceedings, wrote to Munden and desired him not to leave Liverpool without Cooke and to keep strict guard over him until he reached London. Cooke kept his proposed engagement with Cooper a profound secret, and within four days of his sailing for America wrote to Harris, saying that he had engaged places for Munden and himself in the London stage-coach that left Liverpool on the following Tuesday, he writing on Saturday.

All that Munden could tell the manager on reaching London was that early on the morning when it was arranged they should leave for London, he called for Cooke at his inn and found him too drunk to heed his urgent request and remonstrance that there was barely time for them then to catch the coach. Finding his entreaties were in vain, and mindful of his own engagements in London, he left Cooke "alone in his glory."

Whether this drunken stupor was assumed by Cooke or not, there is no doubt the report of Munden on reaching London, together with the well-known habits of the great tragedian, gave rise to the rumor to which Cooper refers.

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## MUSIC AND DRAMA.

### A Sheaf of Anecdotes.

William B. Wood relates the following anecdotes of Thomas Athorppe Cooper, in his "Personal Recollections of the Stage:" Cooper, though patient under criticism, was sensitive enough of outrage or insult. Upon one occasion, Bernard, Darley, Sr., and himself were invited to give an entertainment of recitations and songs, comic and serious, at Richmond. In the audience was a gentleman who considered himself qualified to dissent from the liberal applause given Cooper. At the close of his delivery of Marc Antony's oration over the body of Caesar, and while the guests were complimenting him, this gentleman made himself conspicuous by hissing very loudly. The audience renewed the applause, the critic his hisses, until he must have felt himself fairly beaten. At the close of the performance Cooper wrote a note to him, enclosing the price of his ticket, and expressing his unwillingness to receive any reward for services so unsatisfactory to a person of such unquestionable taste. The style of the note, as may be supposed, was not misunderstood by the gentleman, who was a professed duellist. Cooper also intimated through a friend that any answer to the note would reach him, as he intended to remain in Richmond for a day or two. No reply was sent, however, and the critical gentleman gained nothing by the affair except the sneers of those who knew him best.

At a certain performance of Othello in Cincinnati long years ago Cooper acted the title character. The great tragedian's fame had drawn a large audience of all sorts and conditions of people, including a country lass who may be called Peggy for convenience. It was her first visit to the playhouse, and as she entered Othello was making his great speech before the senators and the Duke of Venice. Peggy was handed into the stage-box by a gentleman and her escort, an awkward country boy, was compelled to remain in the lobby. She stared about for a moment, seemingly disconcerted at her unusual surroundings, and then saw that there were several unoccupied chairs on the stage. This fact alone might not have led to her subsequent discomfiture, but the people on the stage seemed to be more at ease than those in the house, and as luck would have it, Othello, looking apparently directly toward her, exclaimed: "Here comes the lady." The senators half rose, in expectation of seeing the "gentle Desdemona," but instead Peggy stepped plump from the box to the stage, and advanced towards the expectant Moor. It is impossible to give any idea of the confusion that followed; the audience applauded and cheered; the duke and senators forgot their dignity; the girl was ready to sink with consternation; even Cooper himself could not help joining in the general mirth. The uproar lasted for several minutes, until the gentleman who had handed Peggy into the box helped her out of her unpleasant situation. It was agreed by those present that no lady ever made her debut with more éclat than Peggy.

During the Revolutionary period in New York—say between 1773-1783—the drama was at low tide, for more stirring dramas in real life were being performed. But the British officers treated the Tory New Yorkers to amateur representations. Among these performers was Major André. Tradition says that he made a grand stage lover and so interested Tory Manhattan belles of the period that they shed copious tears over his fate.

Feminine theatregoers in olden New York had their male idols on the stage. During the Adams Administration they lavished attentions on young Thomas Athorppe Cooper, who was a noted *Hamlet*. He bequeathed his personal beauty to a daughter who captivated the eldest son of President John Tyler. Cooper long resided in this city after his retirement from the stage, and through his son-in-law's influence obtained a berth in the Custom House. Many merchants of to-day, then office boys or clerks, can recall his rubicund face, his old-fashioned courtesy and air of high breeding, and his habit of always holding a monocle in his eye. Even in his ripe old age he seemed to feel as he often strolled along lower Broadway—the promenade of the period—that he remained an object of interest to feminine eyes.

William W. Clapp in his "Record of the Boston Stage" tells a curious story of the improvident habits of Thomas A. Cooper, one of the famous tragedians of the early days of the American stage. It seems that he was standing on Broadway, in New York, one afternoon with an acquaintance, when a load of hay approached. "I'll bet you," said Cooper, "the value of my benefit to-night, against an equal sum, that I'll pull the longest wisp of hay from that load." "Done," said his companion. The wisps were pulled, and Cooper lost. "Ah!" he remarked, with the greatest nonchalance, "I've lost two hours' acting." The benefit netted the winner upwards of \$1200.















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